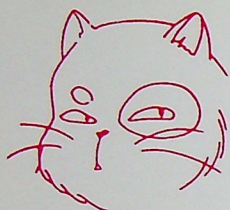


THE NEW STANDARD

ANIMENOMINOUS!

**PREMIERE
ISSUE**

\$3.75 SUMMER 1990



**Girls
With Guns**

**Urusei Yatsura:
There's More To
This Show Than
Just Tiger Stripes**

**Captain Harlock:
Looking For A
Place To Die**

**Take Me To
Summer Side:
Kimagure
Orange Road**



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THE NEW STANDARD

ANIMEME

ANIMENOMINOUS:

Ah NEE may nom IN us (n)

Why

"Animenominous"?

As a group, Animenominous began on a Commodore telecommunication service called "Quantum Link" in 1987. We still meet there every alternate week, by the way. During a discussion very late one night, we came up with "Animation Anonymous" since only a few brave souls really liked to admit that they watched cartoons. The name was almost immediately shortened to the current form, and when the group grew, the name stuck.

This magazine breathed first as a newsletter compiled from users in Animenominous. "Anime-E", ((ANIME)-(E)lectronic mail) printed five issues, and these are still in the public domain on many small BBS' throughout the country. Then several people outside the service suggested that we take our project into the "real world". When things began to look positive, we elected to bring our project into comic shops everywhere. After all, to increase the audience for this imported animation is really what we're all about. All of the Animenominous staff hopes that people will continue to discover this material that we've come to enjoy so much.

In the years to come, you'll hear about all sorts of things. You'll see photos from upcoming films and series, and get hard information on things that previously had to be purchased "blind". In short, we're all working very hard to be the best English magazine on Japanese animation that you can buy, and

we think that we can achieve that goal. There are many plans to try exciting and different ideas that will make Animenominous magazine the best that you can buy. To this end, there are things that we're looking for (naturally). There are articles to be written-lots of them. If you've got an article in you, write to us and tell us. Since we don't play the political game that some animation groups do, we'll give anyone a fair shake.

It should be said at this point that we're certainly not perfect. Although we have native speakers and proofreaders on staff, errors will certainly creep through from time to time. If you spot one that we missed, or have something to say (good or bad) about the job we're doing, then tell us! We enjoy hearing from our readers. Without you, the reader, there wouldn't be a magazine. Without feedback from the readers, we've got to go on our best guess what you're looking for. Tell us! Your editor can be reached at the editorial offices, on Quantum Link as "Doraeman" (please note deliberate misspelling), and on Compuserve as "72200,1171".

So buckle your seat belts, take the phone off the hook, and read away! It'll be one hell of a ride!

Standby...OK!

NOMINOUS!

**GIRLS
WITH GUNS 2**



**Looking For A Place
to Die 7**



PATLABOR 12



**OSAMU TEZUKA
40 Years
of Comics 14**



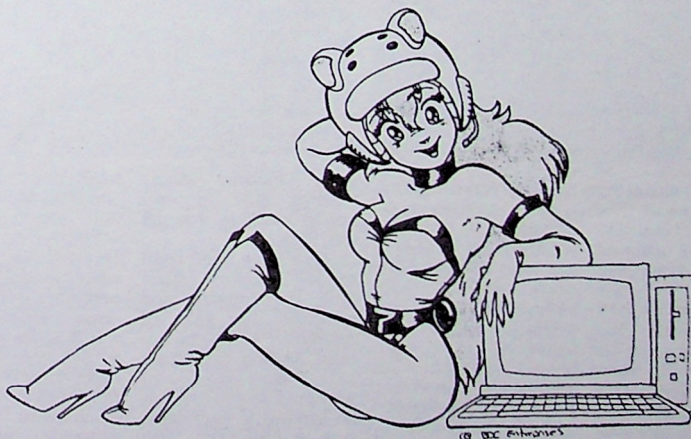
**Take Me to Summer
Side: ORANGE
ROAD 20**



**There's More to This
Than Just Tiger
Stripes 23**



Jasta 31



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GIRLS WITH GUNS



Top: Fujiko Mine from Lupin III. Above: Patty from Gall Force. Right: Maris from Super Gal.

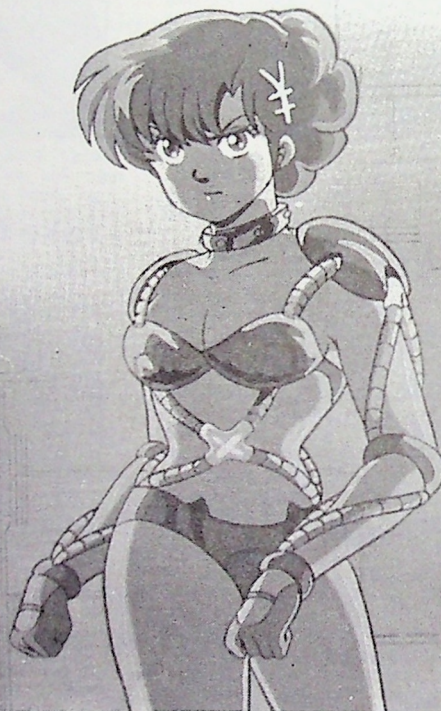
You've seen them. Females wearing a rocket launcher, a smile, and nothing else. Wide-eyed with field artillery. Quiet and unassuming little girls in short, levitating dresses. Extremely loud, red headed dynamos with an "up yours" attitude. Schoolgirls in immaculate uniforms that destroy large parts of planetary defense systems while on the way home from school (and before tea). Motorcycle riding females in decidedly odd garb with nasty energy swords. Sword bearing ladies in strange costumes who battle foes twenty times their size. Peek-a-boo nudes with machine guns. Peek-a-boo anthropomorphised CAT nudes with machine

firearms don't hurt the appeal of a new show. The development of the OVA (Original Video Animation) has spurred the introduction of many new faces in the never ending quest of more heavily armed females. It isn't my purpose to mention them all (THAT would take this entire magazine, anyway), but to point out a few of the signposts along the journey.

Our cover this month features *Dream Hunter REM* from the OVA series by the same name who typifies the females in question. She looks like she's about twelve, yet she drives a custom Honda turbo "city" car at breakneck speed with little regard

proton-pack, but it's only a short step of logic to find that she is Japan's answer to *Ghostbusters*. Instead of the beige coveralls, she elects either a rather strange Bikini (with a sword) or the alternate lycra (with the gun). A cute little girl (Kawai-ko chan) who is very, very dangerous.

As one might expect, REM isn't the first of these ladies. While there are certainly girls who made an earlier debut, FUJIKO MINE (*Lupin III*) is undoubtedly the best early example. Fujiko usually wanders around in nondescript clothing...whatever costume is necessary to do the job is worn. Her armament of choice is usually a small Browning .32

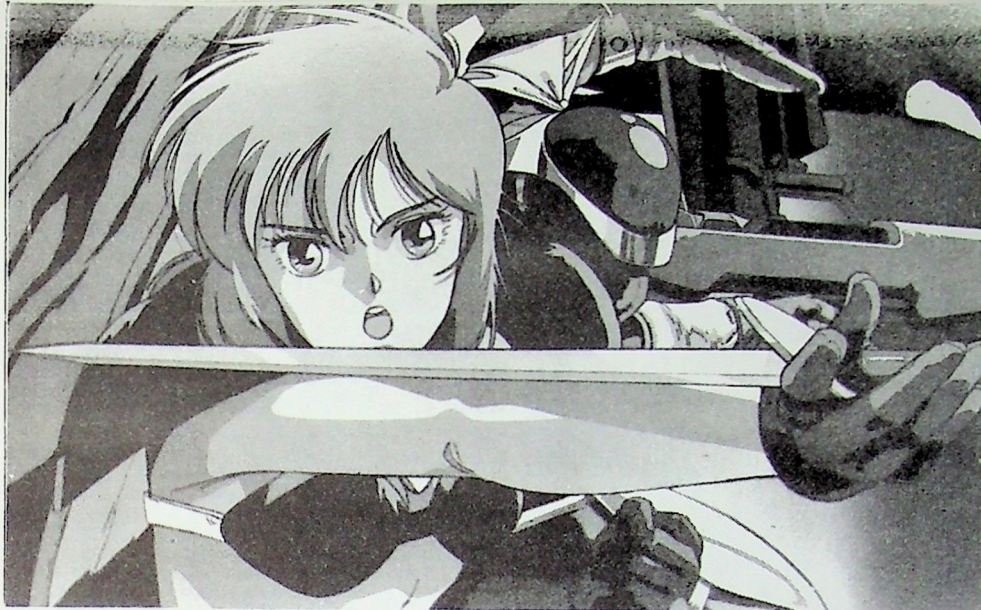


guns. Psionic ladies wearing little "encumbering" clothing. You get the idea...

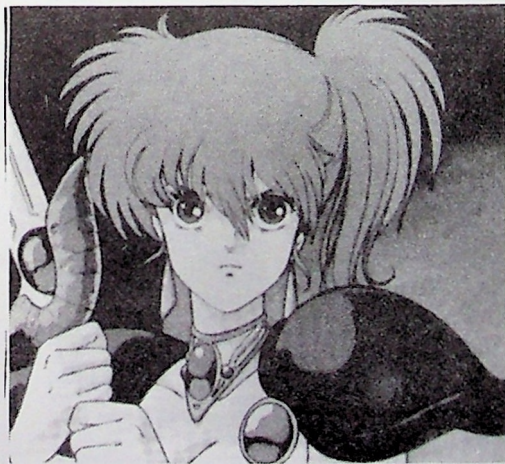
Girls have been used to sell products since time immemorial, and naturally the field of Animation is no exception. Among producers and directors of animated films, there is an increasing awareness that a few girls with

to traffic regulations. She also usually packs a .44 magnum revolver with dum-dum bullets. This girl has the somewhat unusual ability to project herself into other people's dreams, and this unusual ability is enough for her to make a fair living in the field of paranormal eliminations. No, she doesn't wear the

automatic and assorted hand grenades; weapons whose boundaries are constantly pushed back by ceaseless experimentation. Since she's a character designed by "Monkey Punch" (Really! That's the name he uses!), her physical attributes are somewhat extreme. These (shall we say) "outstanding" charac-



From top: *Dragon Era*, *Catseye*,
Fantastic Adventure of Yohko.



teristics are further illustrated by the fact that she appears in an unclothed state far more often than most females. Even when she is fully clothed, her spectacular (some would say deformed) construction is more than apparent. In many ways, she's the mold for girls like Dirty Pair's "Kei" in terms of personality, but unlike almost everyone else she's in her exploits for herself. She'd sell out her own Grandmother for her gold teeth in just a few microseconds. It's therefore no accident that she usually allies herself with Lupin; he's the only person in the universe who can survive her company, and can recoup his losses easily. She'll steal from anyone, but for some reason or another she'll lose her clothing in the process. If someone allows this to distract them however, they'll wind up very dead very quickly.

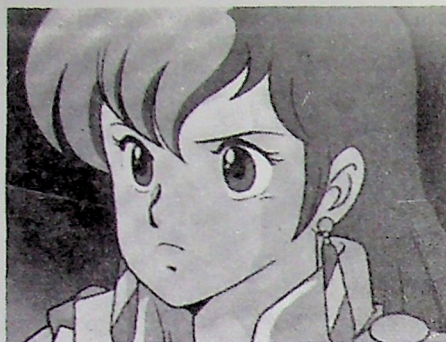
The next chronological example of this genre would undoubtedly be JUNE from the series *Science Ninja Team Gatchaman* (better known to American fans as either *G-Force* or *Battle of the Planets*). June's weapon of choice is a yo-yo, but she's quite comfortable going toe to toe with any nasty-type who is stupid enough to cross her

path. Now, most people would scoff at the idea of a simple yo-yo as a terrifying weapon, but her's is slightly different from your average Duncan. It's been modified to include spikes that protrude on command that are of considerable length and respectable sharpness. There's little that can be considered "cute" about June; she can probably best be described as "frosty". One particularly memorable scene with June was in the first episode of the first series, and involved with a gentleman who is firing a machine gun in her general direction. She produces the yo-yo, drops it to the length of the string (releasing the spikes), and hurls it in this fellow's direction. It comes to rest in his neck and he dies bleeding profusely at her feet. She then proceeds to spool the string and do yo-yo tricks with the weapon. Before you ask, it got cut from the American release (I wonder why...).

Somewhat less known to viewers on this side of the Pacific is CUTEY HONEY from the series of the same name. She's the product of a famous Japanese manga artist Go Nagai who is the man behind more familiar things like *Mazinger-Z* (*Tranzor-Z*) and *Devilman*. Cutey,

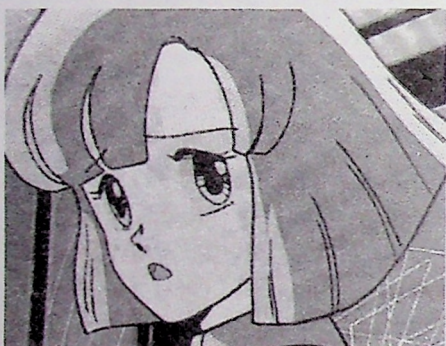
however, is quite distant from *Mazinger*. She (Cutey) is the last form that a particular multiple-personality android (Kisaragi Honey) can assume. Cutey is most comfortable with a razor sharp sword that seems to materialize at the same time as her black and yellow costume does out of thin air. Exactly how this occurs is in doubt, but when she "changes" her personality mode, there is a short interval of nudity that is quickly replaced with her new clothes. As if this wasn't enough, Cutey (in her assorted forms) battles all sorts of bizarre villains (all female, usually grotesquely so). It's indeed an unusual show, and all the more so considering the fact that this ran on Japanese TV in 1973.

While there were examples in the interim, the next strong examples would come in 1981 with *Urusei Yatsura*. Now a familiar title to most folks buying comics, *Urusei* is loaded with interesting, powerful, and heavily armed females. By strict definition, we'd probably best stick with BENTEN and LAN for this one. These two girls are about as different as you can get: while Benten wanders about through the series wearing stainless steel clothing, Lan wears the



frilly dresses. Both have large assortments of weapons, but both usually prefer something akin to large rocket launchers. Whatever the weapon (and whichever the girl) it's typically used to the utmost of its capability.

While it's a bit out of the definition, our next chronological example of the girls-with-guns phenomena is *Catseye*. This show could very easily have been another *Dirty Pair* (a comedy with lot's of stuff blowing up every week), but it instead drifted in another direction. The show featured three female lead characters who run an unexciting coffee shop during the daylight hours (the Catseye Cafe), but during the evenings they engaged in spectacular thefts. While they didn't use the firearms, most fans of the show don't seem to miss them. Using James Bond type gadgets, these leotard-clad ladies are always multiple steps ahead of the hapless police department (and of course, they never get caught). Even with the one of them being deeply in love with the very police officer who is chasing them relentlessly, he was never quite able to arrest them. A curious footnote to the TV life of *Catseye* is that while the sex was comparatively low-keyed for the first season the show was a respectable success. When the producers elected to make sex the primary ingredient to sell the show, it floundered and was not



renewed for a third season.

Prime Rose, an Osamu Tezuka TV special from 1983 seemed destined to be yet another in the long line

of "girl's" shows. *Prime Rose* (the title character) has a tale which is your typical animation story: her father the King was murdered with her next in line. She escaped her



captor, and was trained to be a warrior by the local master of swordsmanship. Convenient, eh? What her trainer didn't count on was her peculiar ability to turn into stone and thus deflect the brunt of an attack. This is used to great advantage as she ventures back into the city and resume her rightful place as Queen. A typical storybook. Typical except for the fact that *Prime Rose*

present: one who is the smooth talking lady with infinite patience (Yuri), the other with the short temper and carrying what is best described as a hand cannon (Kei). These two surprisingly competent ladies who wear yellow (or silver: depends on the girl) Bikini "uniforms" have a reputation that almost always precedes them. While you never actually see their "target" surrender after hearing

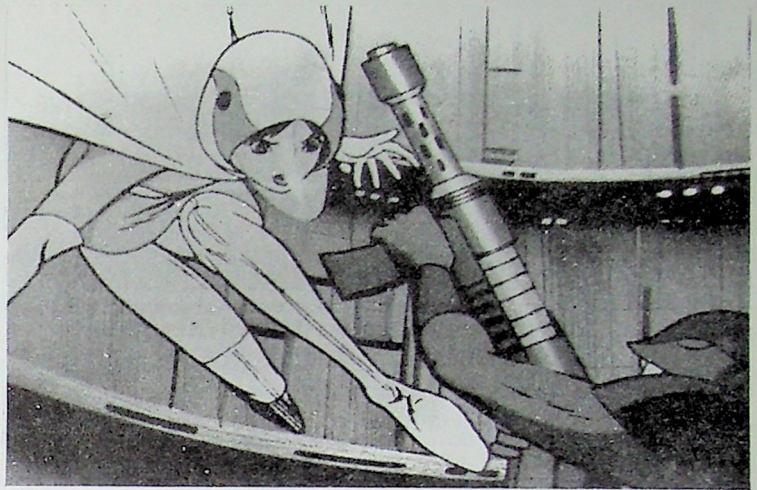


herself wanders about in a costume that perhaps best be described as a black swimsuit...more or less (with the emphasis on less).

So we've now worked our way all the way up to 1985 and find the one that American Animation fans are probably the most familiar with: *Dirty Pair*. After all, what would an article like this be without at least a mention of those two "trouble consultants" who habitually trash planets? KEI and YURI are probably as close as we can get to the dictionary-type definition of the girls-with-guns genre. Two opposite personalities are

their code name ("Love-ly Angel": *Dirty Pair* is a nickname that they don't appreciate at ALL), it's sure to knock some of the wind out of the bad guys' sails.

We'll skip ahead a bit in 1985 and find *Leda, The Fantastic Adventures Of Yohko* (another of the more-or-less "girls" shows). YOHKO herself is a bikini clad warrior who happens upon an unusual tableau after being transported by her personal stereo. With the help of a most unusual plant, she winds up equipped with the blue swimsuit, a focused energy sword and winds up swashbuckling after a fashion. She also pilots



a somewhat interesting (and coincidentally "legendary") flying vehicle. It's also interesting that after a fairly good reception for this film, it took several more years before a second installment was made.

From here, the floodgates really seem to open as OVA's really came into their own.

One of the more recognized "beings" in Japan these days is ICZER 1. The question of sex is a difficult one when it comes to Iczer 1: there are semi-reliable reports that "she" is in fact male (When *I* went to school, boys didn't look anything LIKE this). Not to trod over ground that will be covered in a more detailed manner later on, I'll only mention that Iczer-1 is a pink jumpsuited construct from an alien world who is out to save Earth. Iczer 1 uses a focused energy sword (not a gun) and (like Lum in Urusei Yatsura) can throw a substantial energy bolt (with CONSIDERABLY more force). Since Iczer has a number after her name, the

corollary Iczer 2 shows up in the second installment of this series (this year's model?) and makes Iczer 1's life quite difficult in your basic slice-and-dice fashion.

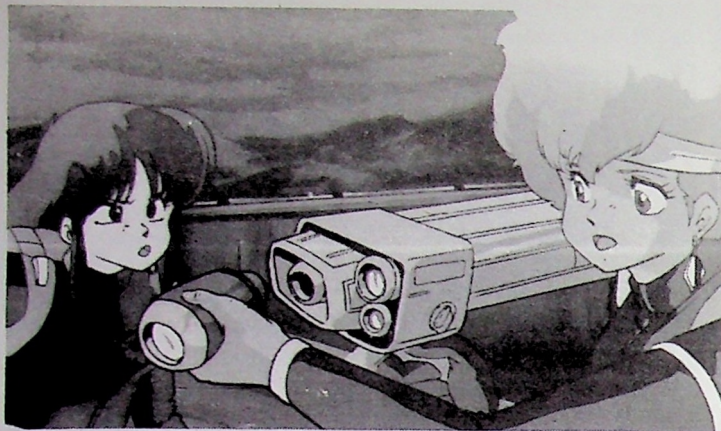
You can't go very far without running into one or more of the *Gall Force* girls, either. The debut film featured no less than seven of them running about in various states of undress through the scenery, and where that not enough, they were usually pictured heavily armed. Since most of these ladies did not live past the initial film, parts (2: *Destruction*) and (3: *Stardust War*) featured only two of the original cast with five new ones. Of course, they too were heavily armed. The one thing that binds the films together is the character were design by Ken-Ichi Sonoda, a man whose name you'll hear more often later. For the time being (and to stay within the environment of *GallForce*) suffice it to say that as the series progressed the quality of the installments declined. Sure, the guns got bigger and

we saw some very interesting action. The quality of the plots, however, deteriorated with more and more of the slack forced to be taken up by the girls themselves. It is really too much to ask for this to happen and still maintain the chemistry of the original. A valiant try to revive the formula was attempted in 1987 with *RheaGallforce* and while it stands well on its own, it's a pale reflection of the original *Gall Force: Eternal Story* film.

Later in 1986, the supposed daughter of Clark Kent and Diana Prince made her screen debut. This red-haired girl (always an interest-

ing sign) arrived in the first of four films attempting to save from a domineering school-mate a little blonde who might well wind up a Space Princess that an alien race is searching for. Her name is, of course A-Ko Megami (actually, "EI" ko: literally "Ability (athletic)/young") and the film(s) *Project Aho*. Aho, like the *Catseye* girls, doesn't use the firearms, but is instead immensely strong. Her foil throughout the series (Bko) DOES use the firearms after a fashion: she uses a highly advanced exoskeleton (she designed and built this herself) with the guns built in.

Firing (now get this...) "Super High Grade Hi-Fi Excellent Atomic Missiles" from the arms of a flying suit, you'd think that Aho wouldn't stand a ghost of a chance. Sorry...Ako is still quite able to defend herself. The only thing that continually saves Bko is that Aho really doesn't want to permanently hurt her (naturally, Bko is under no such constraints). For those not already aware, Bko's exoskeleton is on the revealing side: the reaction of her school-mates is quite hysterical laughter. I'm quite certain that the battle equipment is in fact a major reason why the series has done as well as it has.



Still later in 1986, an installment of Rumiko Takahashi's *Lumic World* series was released that was called *The Super Gal*. The title character ("VAMPIRE" MARIS) is so strong that she must take precautions (she is forced to wear metal restraints) to prevent her from destroying her surroundings. When her "evil" counterpart appears ("ZOMBIE" SUE), we find that when the homeworld went fourth-of-July time several people were able to leave. Sue's restraints are much smaller, but as the film progresses we discover that Sue has mastered the art of fighting dirty, and this certainly has a way of evening things up.

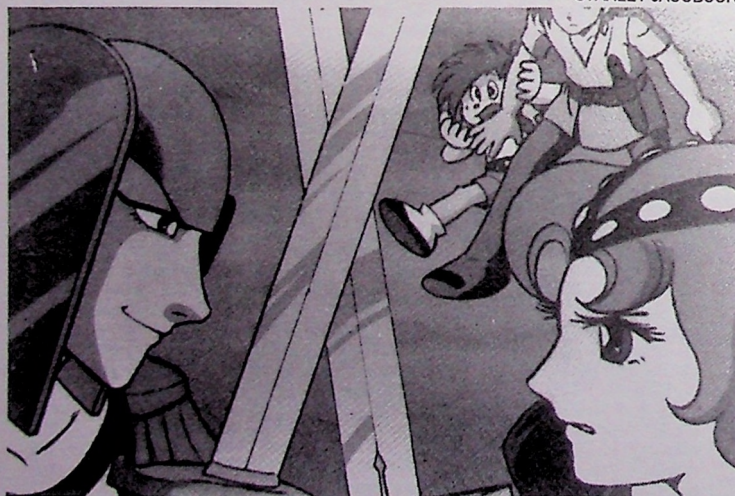
In 1987, the Japanese took a cue from the film *Blade Runner* and introduced their own version of future society based on some of the names in the novel *Do Androids Dream*

Of Electric Sheep? The finished product bears absolutely no similarity to either product but is in fact a still continuing 13-part OVA series collectively called *BubblegumCrisis*. CELIA STINGRAY, LINNA YAMAZAKI, NENE ROMANOVA and the omnipresent PRISS make "Megatokyo" their home battling a succession of nasty (and illegal) robots (boomers) who go around killing people and lowering property values. The equalizing element in the story is the introduction of "hard suits": armored form fitting battlegear (crunchy on the outside...) with (once again) potent weapons built in to the arms. Armaments range from contact type explosives and energy swords to large caliber projectile guns, and like all examples mentioned here, no one in the series seems

to mind blowing off some ordinance once in a while.

After all that, we've still only barely scratched the surface (I'm sure by now some people are annoyed that we didn't even mention ANNAPUMA and YUMIPUMA from *Dominion*, not to mention about a million others). There are many in places you'd expect to find the interesting and armed females, many more in places that you might not expect (like in *Dragonball* for instance). This medium is packed for those who find the dangerous girls a bit more than interesting, and the so-far steady stream of new faces does not seem in one bit of danger of drying up. Who knows...if this continues we might see yet another installment, but for now I've got to stop these ladies from trashing the Editorial offices.

STANLEY JACOBSON



Prime Rose

Ako Megami from Project A-ko



CAPTAIN HARLOCK: LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO DIE

SIMON GREY

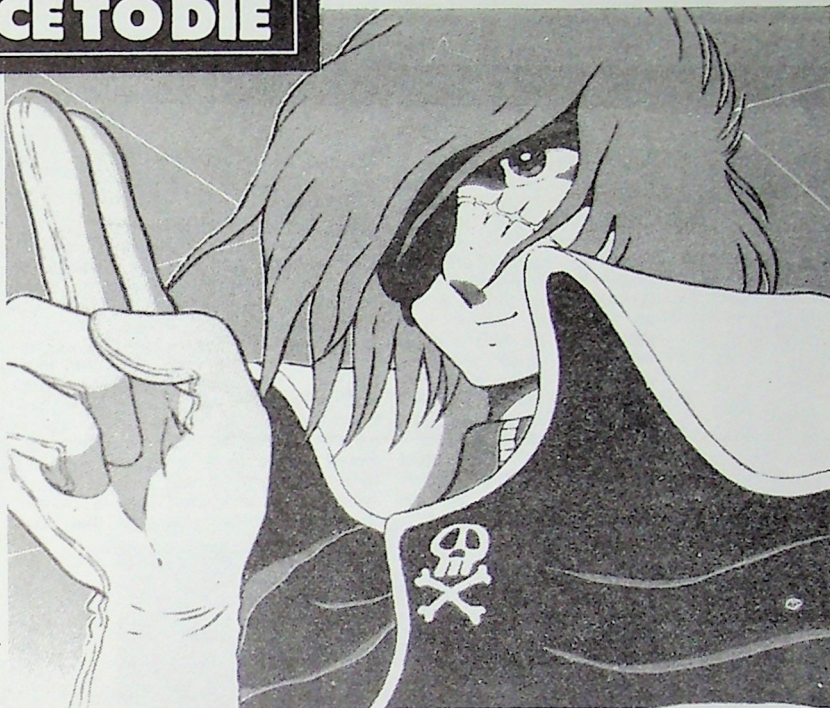
There was a time in the early seventies when the name **Reiji Matsumoto** was mentioned, fans would stop what they were doing and listen. He, like his mentor **Osamu Tezuka**, controlled the fledgling television animation industry with his original creations like *Space Cruiser Yamato*, *Queen Millennia*, and *Galaxy Express 999*. Even though he's made films afterward (*Mirror of Arei/ Way to the Virgin Space* and *Saint Elmo's Fire*), after his somewhat disappointing *Final Yamato* (1983), his name has been largely forgotten.

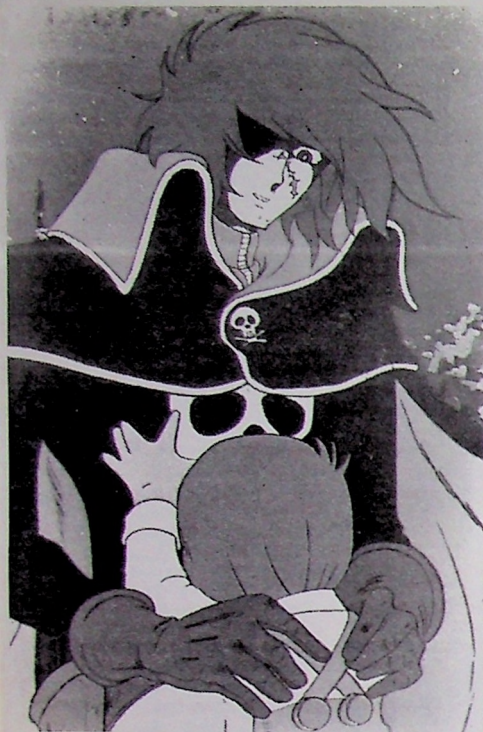
Probably his most distinctive and recognized character is that of **Phantom F. Harlock**, the space pirate complete with eye patch, (an alien) bird, and a laser sword. He appears in several movies and TV series (since many of the Matsumoto universe films are linked), usually acting insufferably macho and blowing up large sections of the enemy fleets. Since he has only a single eye (and thus no depth perception), this is an interesting feat. The character somehow supports this suspension of disbelief and the viewer seldom questions just how Harlock does this; it's just not important. Certainly, his is one of the most dynamic figures in all of animation.

Harlock himself is a bit of an anachronism; he belongs to a period where animation was limited to every-third or even

every-fifth drawings. Compensating for the poor motion were single drawings that were very strong with fantastic, splashy color. When the Harlock movie (*Wo Ga Seishun no Arcadia: My Youth in Arcadia*) came around, not only did his character change, but the drawing style had mutated into a smooth and less distinctive one. Matsumoto's rough and dynamic style had all but disappeared.

The animated introduction of this character was in the *Captain Harlock, Space Pirate* TV series directed by Rin Taro (premiering on March 14, 1978). In this series, Harlock and his entourage battled the "Mazone" (a race of plants who burn when they are killed). The Mazone look like women (according to Harlock, they are "beautiful...too beautiful"). These "beautiful" aliens are currently en route back to Earth as it is one of the old colonies, and since Earth residents are somewhat lethargic these days, nothing can really stand in their way. The World government, with more than enough food for the planet, had become fearful of the population's ability to upset the balance and revolt out of boredom. To counteract this, the government is broadcasting "hypnotic waves" over the planet's television and radio systems to ensure that no one will be inclined toward violence. The Mazone WILL have Earth. Well, maybe...





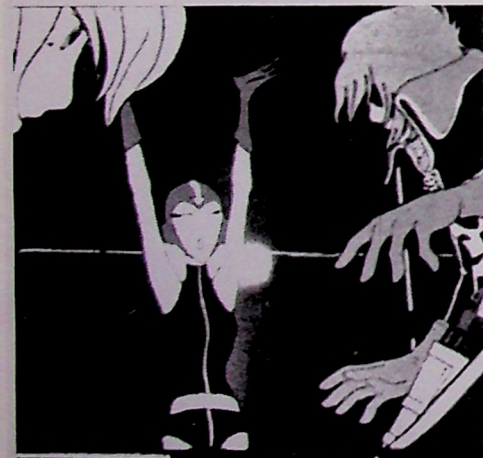
Harlock is an outlaw; a man who defies the system, turning his back on his own race. Since he is a renegade with a the most powerful space cruiser in known space (The "Arcadia", a space cruiser with "flow shielding" which enables it to deflect almost anything) and occasionally attacks freight ships, the Earth government wants him stopped. A typical government, they ignore the great threat of the Mazone and instead concentrate on something they can see (Harlock). The President (between horse racing action) berates a certain General Kiruda (the commander in charge of the Harlock Operation) for continually failing to capture and execute Harlock. A typical Matsumoto villain, Kiruda is not an evil man; rather he's doing what he feels is right. When he finds that the current ills of the world are not actually Harlock's doing, he repents his past and joins Harlock's band of pirates.

Harlock's stated philosophy is that anyone who doesn't care to help themselves doesn't deserve

outside assistance. Why then would he attempt to save the very planet's population that branded him an outlaw? To answer that question, we have to introduce another Matsumoto character who transcends series in one way or another: Tochiro Oyama. While Harlock is the brash swashbuckling warrior, Tochiro is a plump engineer (yet another variation on both Nobota Oyama and Matsumoto himself) who just happens to be brilliant. He's shown in only two or three episodes this time around, but his spirit (his living essence if you will) is contained in the ship's computer. Before he "died", he fathered a daughter who is now living on Earth. Mother, if you didn't already know, is EMERALDUS. Although it damages Emeraldus' image (she's basically a female Harlock although they are not related), she nonetheless bore a daughter. As Tochiro lay dying, Harlock made an agreement that his daughter would always have a place to live on Earth. It was this agreement that caused this chain of events, although

Harlock usually states simply that he's "looking for a place to die" when asked why he fights. He often visits this little girl (MAYU) on Earth at great risk, and early in the series he gave her an Ocarina. This particular musical instrument functions as a psychic link between the two as when one plays, the other is usually doing so also. Mayu views this ocarina as something to find solace in, playing as things go awry.

Naturally, the Mazone are not going to simply roll over and quietly die (it wouldn't be much of a story if they did, now would it?). What they lack in firepower they make up for in very large numbers of spacecraft and soldiers who are quite fanatical. According to Harlock, they "play with emotions", rationalizing that victory must be achieved at any cost. In this they are probably correct as the Mazone now have no home; Earth is the only place to go. There is no turning back. Dying in battle is better than a death in space looking for a home, particularly when that death may accomplish



Nuremu committing suicide, attempting to take Harlock and Tadashi as well.



Emeraldus and infant Mayu.



Kiruda under the influence of Mazone.

something. As the course of battle turns to Harlock later in the series, more risky and downright underhanded techniques are used to destroy both Harlock and the Arcadia. The Mazone eventually learn the "secret" of the 41st crewmember (Tochiro), and they perfect a method of passing through the Mazone detection equipment. By that point Harlock has enlisted the aid of General Kiruda. He too has come to understand the ineffectiveness of the current Earth government, preferring to fight "under the flag of Freedom". We eventually discover that he was an orphan, he's protecting a group of other orphans out in the middle of the desert, and he's not such a bad guy after all. As Kiruda lay dying after protecting the Arcadia from a particularly nasty Mazone onslaught in episode 39, he hallucinates a group

of children (the children that he protects) calling to him ("Brother...") to come and play. He then obediently expires. Harlock apologizes to him that he must bury him on one of his "pirate islands" (space stations) and not Earth, but the Mazone come first.

The enemy battlefleet (the remains of the once great Mazone Empire) is headed by the black robed villainess RAFFLESSIA who accepts Harlock as her personal challenge. With her second in command CLEO, she taunts Harlock, kidnaps Mayu, and unleashes general after general on him. She is also (naturally) hiding something from the audience, Harlock, and the Mazone soldiers themselves. It isn't until virtually the end of the series that we find that Rafflessia herself isn't a plant like the other Mazone but a flesh-and-blood human. The deeper significance of this fact is lost some-

where in the translation, but we know that Matsumoto really does love to leave us hanging after his stories finish.

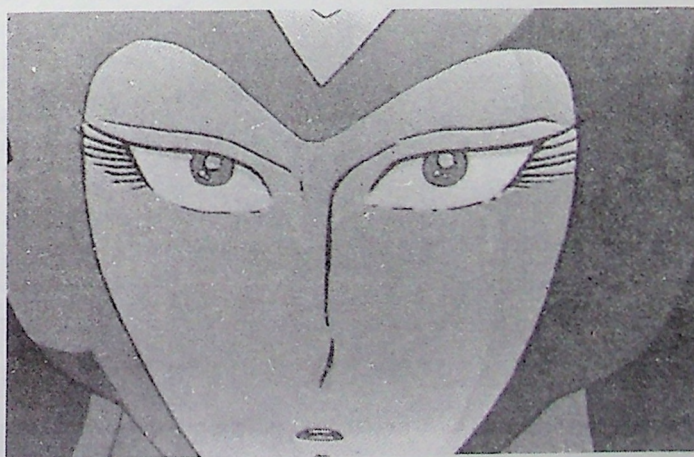
Also very significant is the fact that everyone on the Arcadia (41 crew) is there for a reason. Granted, everyone on the show is secondary to Harlock, but they are all quite interesting nonetheless. Each of them has his or her own sad story to tell, usually something like the corrupt Earth Empire laughing at their parents' great achievements, being imprisoned for refusing someone's advances, having one's planet taken over, having one's parents murdered, having one's offspring kidnapped. The usual. A real peak is reached in episode 16 ("A Song of Farewell") with Kei Yuki going home to discover that not only was her ex-boyfriend responsible for the death of her father, but he's also now working with the

Mazone in trying to extract the secrets of the Arcadia from her by torture. During the shows run of 42 episodes each of the major characters gets their own episode, and several more minor characters do also. Some critics of the period in general and Matsumoto in particular point out that this is teeters on the edge of becoming one long depressing series as all throughout the fabric of this is nothing but sadness. There is seldom any hope for the future: only more and more destruction with unfulfilled dreams and ambitions. To a degree this was true at the time and is still to a lesser degree true today. The "Space Pirate" series certainly has more than it's share of depression but it's nowhere near as depressing as *Galaxy Express 999*.

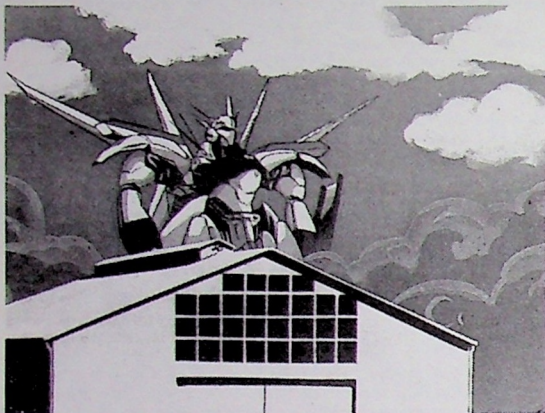
While this show does have a few episodes that

go over the edge and mar the otherwise tight structure, it succeeds in telling a story with the flair of an early Matsumoto show. It places in a glaring light the later incarnations of the character, showing them to be shallow and not up to the fullest possible storytelling. Things like *My Youth in Arcadia* and *Endless Road SSX* (the second TV series) somehow seem much less satisfying due to the changes in the character of Harlock himself. It is indeed telling that the later shows moderately succeed ONLY because of the visage of Harlock, and not from the mistake-making Harlock from the original Space Pirate series.

This show is one of the things that the new fan should really be looking at, particularly if you've seen some *Space Cruiser Yamato* and were not impressed. By comparison, this is an action packed show that was less concerned with love triangles and more with blowing things up. Still, there's more than just a mass of burning bodies to keep one's interest. One can watch this show and see just what they are looking for. With the advent of the Eclipse comic, people are once again discovering that animation did not just spontaneously generate around two years ago, and while Harlock is not the first comer to all this, he is nonetheless still as viable a character as he ever was.



POLICE PRESENCE PATLABOR



Mobile Police Force



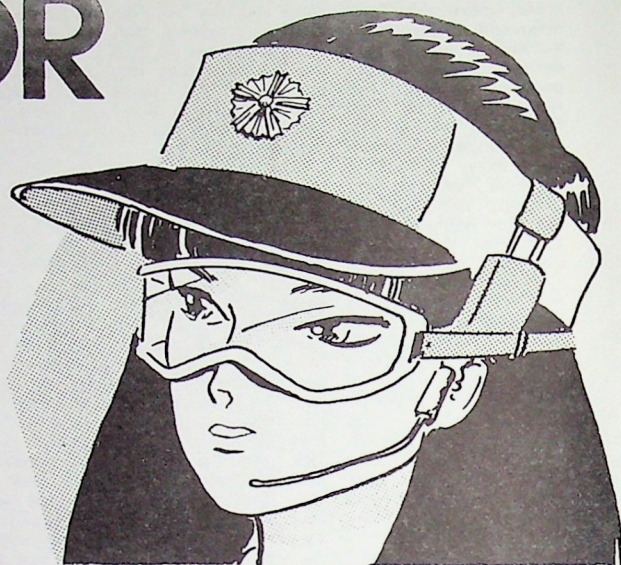
In 1998, the city of Tokyo, Japan began to implement a plan to improve its chronic lack of space and overpopulation. Termed the "Babylon Project" after the Hanging gardens of Babylon (a wonder of the ancient world), the plan is to fill in a large portion of Tokyo Bay, thereby increasing the physical size of the city tremendously. To accomplish this engineering marvel, many State of the Art heavy construction machines (manually operated robots) called "labor" were developed and mass produced.

The Babylon Project does not go unopposed. A large group of radical environmentalists/terrorists called the "Uminoye" (Sea House) has been sabotaging the project since its inception. The need for "Labor" to begin the project is soon met, but industrial competition and new designs flood the Tokyo market with the powerful machines. Seizing the opportunity, criminals and terrorists such as the Uminoye seize the now easy to obtain Labor, opening up a new age of Labor-Crime. The Tokyo Metropolitan Police (TMP) board has seen to the development of Labor for law enforcement purposes, but the number of crimes coupled with the labor technology has made it necessary for them to develop a more advanced and powerful form of Labor. The Ingram AV98 is produced to meet this need, and the begin-

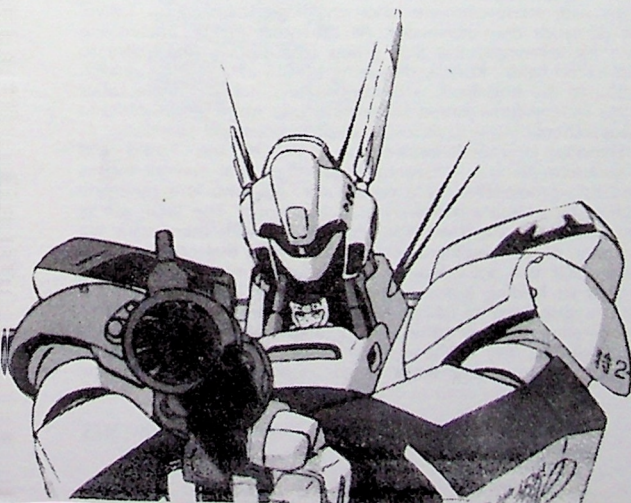
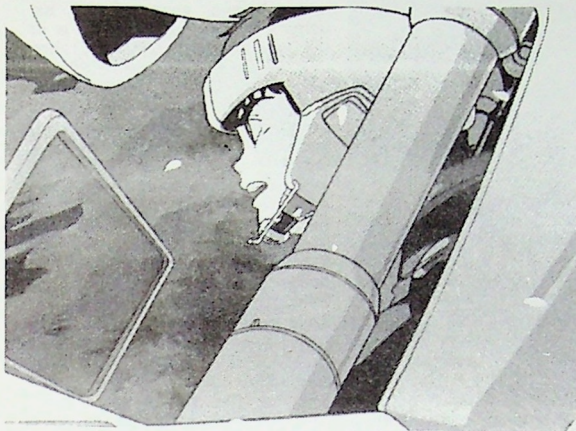
nings of an elite police organization (SVII) is recruited from young police officers serving all over Japan. The SVII branch will deal exclusively with Labor related crimes in Tokyo, and are known collectively as the "Labor Patrol", or simply "Patlabor".

SVII is commanded by Shinobu Nagumo, a dauntless young commander in the TMP. Serving directly under her is Captain Shinichi Goto, a brilliant strategist and ex-army officer with a cool and almost bored disposition. He is directly

responsible for the Patlabor officers and knows he has his job cut out for him. SVII is not a very welcome addition to the TMP, and many officers consider it an insinuation that the regular police cannot do their jobs. It is therefore not surprising that they too seek to sabotage the group by choosing its cadets in a careful manner. First chosen for this corps is Noa Izumi, a very young, overly emotional police woman who prior to this was directing traffic. While she is no genius, she certainly means well, and is the designated pilot of one of the robots, to which she refers to as "Alphonse". Driving support for Noa is Azuma Shinohara, son of the wealthy industrialist who produces the best Labor avail-



able, and maker of the Labor used by SVII. He has a bad home life what prompted him to work for the Police department. He is very cynical and tends to complain constantly. The second pilot of SVII is Isao



Ota. He constantly goes into fits shouting "I want to shoot! Give me a gun, I want to SHOOT!". He is a real asset to the group. Riding backup for Isao is Mikiyasu Shinshi, a very intelligent young man who is usually Azuma's partner in crime. He is married, and as such, is henpecked by his wife Tamiko. Last in the group is Hiromi Yamazaki who is also the most stable. He is a giant, imposing looking man, very strong and quiet. He is by nature a pacifist, however, and like to make his own Bento Box for lunch. He is also habitually neat. Hiromi serves as a reserve pilot for SVII, and rides backup when needed.

To assist SVII in it's war against crime is "Koncho", the commander of the Patlabor base on Tokyo Bay. He is an old veteran of the TMP, wise and patient. Nothing seems to bother him yet he rules the Labor Patrol with an iron hand. His chief engineer is Shige, and brilliant technician and mechanic, but like the rest of the troops is none too stable. He can fix anything that goes wrong with the mecha, and refuses to allow anyone else to tinker with the machines.

The first installment of this OVA series is little more than what has been previously said. The recruits arrive at the SVII base and await the arrival of the new machines which are caught in the nightmare of futuristic Tokyo traffic. When they finally do arrive, the recruits have gotten to know each other and have pulled the weeds at the base. The following day, they respond to their first call and are promptly stuck in traffic and have to proceed under Labor power. The suspects are in a wheeled-tripod Labor and are hotly pursued by quite a large number of Police cars. Isao is the first to attempt blocking it's path finally getting his opportunity to "shoot". He quickly empties his gun, missing the target entirely but managing to hit every one of the police cars. During the ensuing action, Isao's machine winds up with it's head removed. Noa shoots a tire off the renegade machine, crippling it, but gets "Alphonse's" arm shot off and the target subsequently escapes. Noa cries about this. The criminals are finally cornered in Veno park and threaten to destroy the Veno museum. The other police don't dare move, but an enraged Noa arrives on the scene smashing her target with Alphonse's severed arm.

Vol 2: Long Shot (Noa has a Freudian Dream). The Mayor of New York City arrives in Tokyo to review the progress of the Babylon Project. Leading the security team for the visit is Konica Clancy of the NYPD. She is a Japanese-Irish-American detective (an excellent one, at that), a shrewd investigator, and very cool under pressure. She is also rather good looking and addresses SVII amid calls of "Are you single? Do you have a sister?" and "Remember Pearl Harbor". Azuma and Noa discover a rocket launcher on a timer that an old lady working for the Uminoye has set outside the Mayor's hotel, and Azuma must disarm it using Konica's instructions relayed by radio. He finally works his way down to two wires and is about to disconnect the wrong one when Konica arrives on the scene, cutting the correct one. "You did it" she tells Azuma as he passes out. When he regains consciousness, he informs Noa that he's leaving the SVII. On his way out, Konica arrives wearing a SVII uniform; She is staying on for one year as an observer. Suddenly, Azuma doesn't want to leave anymore.

Vol 3: 4 1/2 Billion Trap. This installment reads as a Patlabor tribute to Godzilla (the film, not so much the creature). A couple who are out on a date stop on a pier on Tokyo bay. The man goes off to buy a Coke, leaving the lady behind. When he returns, the car and his girlfriend have vanished, leaving only some strange sideways skid marks that disappear into the water.

Mr. Matsui, an inspector for the TMP calls upon SVII for aid in the investigation of this unusual occurrence. It seems that in addition to the previous incident, some very important underwater power cables for the Babylon project have been severed. While Noa and Azuma watch, an irate man is refused admittance to Mr. Matsui. He is Doctor Hirata, a genetic engineer who insists he has evidence of vital importance to the case.

"Time is short!" he screams, but the police discount him as a crank.

Koncho and Shige launch a robot sub into Tokyo Bay to scan the bottom with Mr. Matsui present. Just as they find the missing car (which is empty), sonar detects a large object closing in. Moments later, the submersible is destroyed. The following day the newspapers scream "Unknown Monster in Tokyo Bay", and Isao asks Goto for permission to use "the big gun". Later, Dr. Hirata runs into Noa, Konica and Azuma. Bringing them to his lab, he asks them what they know about the concept of Evolution. Naturally, both Azuma and Noa are clueless. Dr. Hirata tells them that the creature menacing the bay area is most probably something that he created some ten years previously from some organic material he found in a meteorite. His speculation is that the chemical waste now present in the bay has mutated the organism. Amid much fanfare, SVII goes off to do battle with the monster in it's own back yard, waiting for it at the Bay. Realizing that battle must be done above the surface of the water, suggestions fly as to how to entice this thing out. Finally, Noa suggests that Dr. Hirata talk to it, as he is most likely it's father. Suddenly, Shige appears in a deep-sea diving suit with an oxygen-destroying tablet to do personal battle with the behemoth. Koncho tries to stop him, but the tablet drops into the water. Moments later, the monster emerges from the water. It's green. It's huge. It looks just like Hiromi. For a few brief moments, the creature and Hiromi communicate on levels beyond human understanding, and with an unspoken agreement reached, the creature leaves never to return.

Vol 4: "L" Tragedy. Robbers have taken a hostage in a video store. As police try to talk them out, Isao freaks, charges, and empties his weapon destroying the store. Goto has had enough; "We are public officials. What you do is not like Great Mazinger or Dangioh. This is not robot anime aimed at children." The group is suspended, and told that they must repeat basic training in order to be recommissioned. SVII is alone at their old training center, and things are starting to get a little strange. The bath fills with blood (when analyzed, it turns out to be paint). Goto cryptically warns to team to avoid the windows at night. Isao, feeling that the rules to not apply to him, walks to the window and sees the ghost of a young girl saying "Please don't shoot me...". The other men in the team see an old Patlabor machine walking outside the barracks covered in slime and piloted by a moldering corpse. They are, as might be expected, a bit shaken by this, but Konica calls them cowards.

Noa and Azuma escape training to get a drink, and Azuma meets an old man who he knows named Gozo. With a bit of coercion, Gozo tells them that the previous Summer during Labor-combat drills, a gun misfired and killed a girl. Later that day, the same thing almost happens to Noa and Azuma. The trigger finger of the Labor moves by itself, but the gun is empty this time. Shige comes to see what would make the trigger finger move that way, and finds that it was programmed to do so by something or someone.

Azuma assembles the group in an attempt to solve this mystery. He says that the slain girl was named Mako Honno, that she was seventeen years old, and that she looks like a girl who works for Gozo. This girl is Mako's sister, and she sought revenge. Subsequently, a programming book, ammunition, and a cassette tape of a girl's voice saying "don't shoot me" are found in Gensan's room. It is a natural and obvious conclusion that he somehow assisted in this.

When Konica arrives moments later, the only thing left to do is go out and lynch Gensan. Konica however has other plans. She immediately berates the other members of the team for drawing emotional conclusions. "Gensan" is in fact a Mr. Sakuma, an instructor. There never was any accident at the training center. The entire exercise was dreamed up by Sakuma,

Goto, Shinobu, Gozo and "Mako" to teach the team a lesson on the indiscriminate use of firearms. Konica then introduces "Mako" as Mahako Goto, Goto's niece. Mahako then apologizes to Goto for telling their plan to Konica. Goto then apologizes to the team, and is promptly pelted with anything the officers can get their hands on.

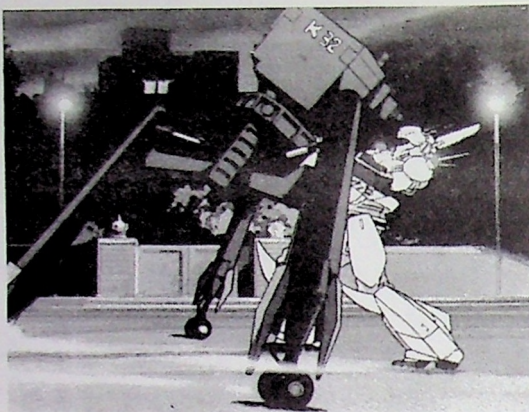
Vol 5 and 6: SVII's longest day. SVII is on vacation. Goto stays at the base with Shinobu because he doesn't have a home to go to, (besides, he likes her). Azuma goes off to his father's factory to see what is in the works for the Military Labor that has been commissioned by the Japan Self Defense Force. This is a new branch of Labor technology, and is therefore Top Secret. Even he is not told exact specifications of the new machines. Proceeding to Konica's apartment, he springs a flower on her and just about gets his head blown off by her quick-drawn .45. She is waiting for her airline tickets as she is about to go home; Azuma is sad because he feels he has no real home to go to. He gives Noa a call who is in the process of being chastised by her father about not yet being married. On the phone, Azuma tells her that he'll come over if would be OK, but that she lives so far from Tokyo.

At a highway police checkpoint in Sendai, a truck carrying Labor is stopped and it's driver is asked for the appropriate paperwork for transporting them. The driver overpowers the police and rams through the barricade. The police give chase, and the Labor is activated. It turns out to be one of the new military models, and is labelled "Grand Defense Force". With it's high-powered machine gun, it makes very short work of the police vehicles.

Shige is outraged when Goto suggests that they send the three Labor out for repairs: he feels that they would be safer were they not all in the same location in the light of current events (agents now watch the base). Koncho approves sending one of them to the Shinohara factory, but Goto has to take it there himself.

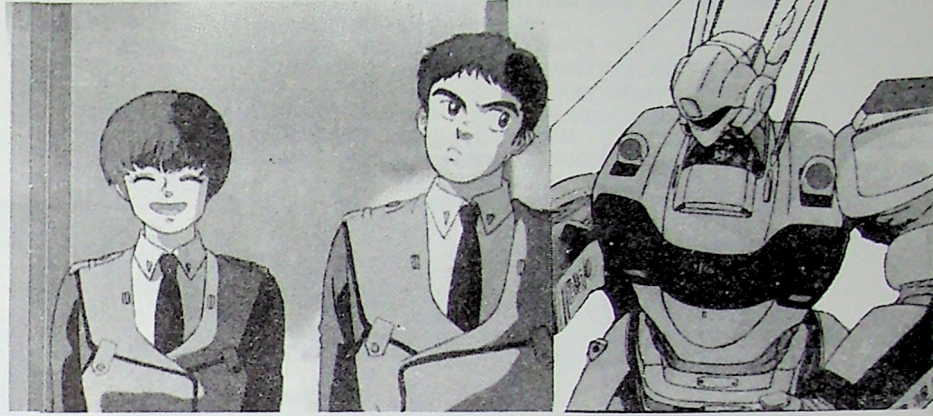
Shinobu gets a call at her home from Goto and they meet in his car. He feels that the JSDF are watching them, and Shinobu agrees. The Labor on the trailer was meant for the military, and along with the stolen Labor was a cruise missile (illegal for the JSDF to own or use). Goto reasons that the missile must have been obtained by the JSDF from the American military. The JSDF then storms the Patlabor base and demands the main programs for the Patlabor vehicles. Koncho, taking Goto's advice to heart, has hidden the vehicles and told the army that they had in fact been dumped into the bay to deny them the software and hardware. Meanwhile, Shinobu and the police with some obsolete labor challenge the JSDF in Tokyo. She demands their surrender. As the news begins to circulate over the television, the SVII group reassembles (incognito) to help in the fight. Konica, disguising herself as a noodle vendor, speaks to the engineers, and Koncho tells her about the Labor at the factory (now unreachable) and one more at the Nakano police school. While it is outmoded, it does still function.

Shinobu is called before the head of the TMPB and government officials. It eventually emerges that current events are being precipitated by a certain Mr. Kai who is a renegade JSDF officer, Goto's old mentor in the Army. The JSDF are in command, and the TMP have cooperated with them with the exception of Shinobu's contingent. She is told that other factions of the JSDF will not act against Kai's forces, nor will the police for fear of hurting innocent people. She is also informed that Goto is suspected of being involved and that he and Kai could be operating together. She is told to await orders, but refuses to sit idly by, yet if she refuses to obey orders, she will be arrested. Shinobu tells them to go ahead and arrest her, and



fighting all the way, leaves. While this is happening in Tokyo, Kōnica, Mikiyasu and Isao steal the Labor from Nakano.

Goto has gone underground in an effort to determine Kai's strategy. Shinobu tells him what has happened, and Azuma calls in with the information that Kai has been seen in Tomakomai and that "Alphonse" is safe at the Shinohara factory. Wondering why Kai was in Tomakomai, he happens on a sign for the Tomakomai/Sendai ferry and immediately

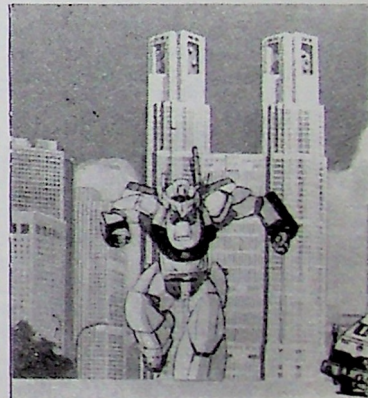


makes the connection with the first incident. Since his car is ruined, he steals an ambulance and contacts Mr. Matsui. He's informed that there is now a warrant out for his arrest, but he'll meet Goto. When he arrives, he brings Mr. Kubo (an agent for the Maritime Safety Agency) who informs them that two ferries from the Tomakomai/Sendai line were hijacked two days previously. Aerial photos show both to have missile launchers mounted on their decks; one of which is real and the other a decoy.

Goto finally succeeds in contacting Kai aboard the "Sunflower" (one of the missing ferries). Kai asks Goto to join him, but people like Kai were responsible for him resigning his JSDF position years previously. Noa and Azuma succeed in freeing "Alphonse", and set off to join Goto. Kōnica and the others are stopped yet again by Isao's insane marksmanship, and fail to breach a JSDF blockade. Hiromi is outfitted in an old labor model fitted into a submarine missile launch tube while Noa (as decoy and aerial assault) is suspended between two helicopters. Kai makes his demands public: if Goto does not surrender to him, he'll vaporize Tokyo with his nuclear-tipped missile. Acting on a hunch, Goto orders an attack on the Sunflower which does indeed contain the missile. As Hiromi fires and destroys the missile, Noa drops onto the deck and arrests Kai. Kai, in typical fashion, swears that he'll one day try again.

Patlabor is currently one of the hottest titles on the Japanese anime market. The phenomenal success of the OVA series which contains an unreviewed seventh volume and a full length movie directed by Mamuro Oshii has spawned both a new TV weekly TV series. Patlabor, as you can see, is not just a big mecha-opera. It is not just about big robots smashing each other up that also happen to have people inside them. Patlabor has a lot of personality going for it—the characters, the animation style, the Mecha, and good storylines really make this series something to see. It is not a big action thriller but instead has mystery and police-work elements in it. Perhaps the most inspiring thing about Patlabor is that it all works with a minimum of violence. The members of SVII are policemen and women, and as such at least make the attempt to serve and protect the citizens of Tokyo in the late 1990's.

*Translated by Chiaki Ojima
Written by Steve Rittler*





1946

- ☐ DIARY OF MA-CHAN *#
- ☐ A-CHAN
- ☐ B-KO CHAN *
- ☐ CHINNEN TO KYO CHAN *
- ☐ LOST WORLD

PUBLISHER FORMATS

KODANSHA
COMPLETE
WORKS ... *

CHOHEN (Long)
SERIES ... @

YOMIKIRI
SERIES ... #
(one volume as of
1981)

1947

- ☐ SHIN TAKA RAJIMA (New Treasure Island)
- ☐ KING KONG
- ☐ MACHAN TONCHAN
- ☐ DR MARS
- ☐ A MAN FROM MARS (+52)
- ☐ DR BAT & JIM
- ☐ GOLDEN BAT #
- ☐ HYAKUNEN KO NO HO..KENGAKU (Treasure Inspection of 100 Year Queen) #

1948

- ☐ TUBERCULOSE #
- ☐ THE JUNGLE KINGDOM *#
- ☐ THE WORLD 1000 YEARS AFTER 1948 *#
- ☐ DETECTIVE GROUP FOR MONSTERS
- ☐ TARZAN'S SECRET BASE OF SHARI RIVER *#
- ☐ GU-CHAN & PAIKO
- ☐ AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
- ☐ THE MOONY MAN (+51)
- ☐ THE MYSTERIOUS UNDERGROUND MEN *
- ☐ KING ROCKET
- ☐ MAGIC HOUSE *
- ☐ STREAM LINE CASE *
- ☐ LOST WORLD *#

1949

- ☐ MIRACLE WOOD STORY
- ☐ THE PISTOL ANGEL
- ☐ KAGEKI
- ☐ FAUST #
- ☐ MAN OF TAIL
- ☐ METROPOLIS #
- ☐ ADVENTURES OF ROCK HOME
- ☐ DETECTIVE BOY, ROCK HOME



1950

- ☐ THE PLAIN OF ABUSEGAHARA
- ☐ FIRE OF TUTELARY GOD
- ☐ THE WONDERFUL JOURNEY
- ☐ CARTOON COLLEGE
- ☐ STRANGE TRAVEL OF DR TIGER
- ☐ JUNGLE EMPEROR * 3

1951

- ☐ NEXT WORLD * 2
- ☐ THE ROAD TO UTOPIAN LURUE
- ☐ BAMBI
- ☐ FOSSIL ISLAND
- ☐ SABOTEN, GET YOUR GUN #
- ☐ WEST RUSH
- ☐ PIPY
- ☐ CAPT ATOM
- ☐ STORY OF WALT DISNEY



Recently, animation and manga fandom collectively said goodbye to one of its greatest contributors, **Osamu Tezuka**. Mr. Tezuka (a doctor by training) discovered that he had contracted stomach cancer some time before. Even after a massive operation that removed a large part of his stomach almost a year before, medicine was unable to save his life.

It's said that most great artists are not recognized in their time. While it is certainly true that he did not receive all the recognition that he was due, his influence has been felt in the production of Manga, and is still to

a large degree felt today. Since a fair percentage of his Manga has been reprinted after his death, some of his greatest works have once again become available through bookstores. Many of these titles will be unfamiliar to all but the most ardent fans, but even the poorest examples of his work show a style that while often copied is seldom equalled. His use of the black and white medium is nothing short of amazing, and his color work is nothing short of unbelievable. One has only to look at one of his pages to see the fantastic use of energy and the sophistication of design. Still, it's apparent that he was never quite satisfied with the result.

1958

- ☐ THE CURTAIN IS STILL BLUE TONIGHT
- ☐ ACCOUNT A STORY OF SANADA-HIMO
- ☐ THE THREE WHO GLIMPSE THE FUTURE
- ☐ THE ANT MAN (-59)
- ☐ THE FILM LIVES ON (-59)
- ☐ PEACOCK SHELL
- ☐ JUNGLE TARO
- ☐ SUPER TAIHEIKI
- ☐ PIN PIN SEI-CHAN
- ☐ THE GHOST AT THE JET BASE
- ☐ THE TWIN KNIGHTS (-59)
- ☐ IN THE COUNTRY SANGORO (-59)

1959

- ☐ DETECTIVE GORI (-61)
- ☐ THE CASTLE OF DAWN (-61)
- ☐ DONGURI MARCH
- ☐ JET KING
- ☐ HIKARI
- ☐ KODAMA-CHAN (-60)
- ☐ DR THRILL
- ☐ ZERO MAN (-60)
- ☐ THE MOMENT
- ☐ CAVE-IN
- ☐ FLOWER & BAR-BARIAN
- ☐ THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
- ☐ THE DEVIL GARON (-62)
- ☐ SONG OF THE WHITE PEACOCK
- ☐ AKEBONO-SAN

1960

- ☐ RABI-CHAN
- ☐ RIN RIN-CHAN
- ☐ I'M SARUTOBI! (-61)
- ☐ TWO PLAYERS
- ☐ CAPT KEN
- ☐ SECRET ORDER #3
- ☐ SOMEONE IS CRAZY!
- ☐ FIRE VALLEY
- ☐ ANGEL'S HILL (-61)
- ☐ THE TALE OF MR & MRS SCHUMANN
- ☐ ADVENTURE BROADCASTING STATION
- ☐ SECRET OF PIRON (-61)

1961

- ☐ THE WHITE PILOT (-62) * 2
- ☐ THE ANT AND THE GIANT
- ☐ CAPT OZUMA (-64) * 4
- ☐ THE STRANGE BOY (-62) * 2
- ☐ NUMBER 7 (-63) * 4
- ☐ EXCUSE ME MAMA (-63)
- ☐ THE HUMAN FARM
- ☐ RECORD OF THE DAWSON FAMILY
- ☐ BAN SHUNSAKU COMES HERE
- ☐ CHILDREN OF MARS & EARTH
- ☐ BONGO (-62)

1962

- ☐ BRAVE DAN
- ☐ TWO MINUS TWO EQUALS TWO
- ☐ BLUE SHADOW BEHIND THE BACKNET
- ☐ THE TRAVEL TO THE 21ST CENTURY
- ☐ YOKKO-CHAN CAME HERE
- ☐ SPIRIT OF THE WILD ROSE
- ☐ IRON ROAD (-63)
- ☐ NEIGHBOR

1963

- ☐ YOU'RE THE LAST ONE!
- ☐ THE EYE IN THE BUILDING
- ☐ SUBMARINE BATHYS DOESN'T EMERGE
- ☐ RAY GUN JACK
- ☐ THE SOUND OF THE DEVIL
- ☐ PRINCESS KNIGHT (-66) * 2
- ☐ ROPPU-KUN (-65)
- ☐ BIG X (-66)
- ☐ THE SHINSEN-GUMI
- ☐ SF FANCY FREE (-64) #
- ☐ THE LOGBOOK OF TATSUMAKI-GO (-64)



40 Years of Comics

1952

- ☐ASHIATO HOT SPRING RANCH
- ☐PINOCCHIO
- ☐CARTOONS CLASS-ROOM
- ☐SON-GOKU THE MONKEY (-59)
- ☐SKYSCRAPER KID
- ☐ADVENTURE OF ROCK HOME
- ☐ROCK IN VOLCANO ISLAND
- ☐MR COVERED WAGON
- ☐ASTRO BOY (-68) * 22
- ☐PEOPLE WITH PISTOLS ON THEIR HEADS
- ☐FOSSIL MAN
- ☐THE FOSSIL MAN STRIKES BACK

1953

- ☐TAMI-CHAN
- ☐CRIME & PUNISHMENT
- ☐GALAXY BOY
- ☐ADV. OF ROCK HOME
- ☐THE 13 SECRETS
- ☐THE MONSTER ON THE 38TH PARALLEL #
- ☐X-POINT ON THE SOUTH PACIFIC #
- ☐BENKEI
- ☐LEMON KID
- ☐PRINCESS KNIGHT (-56)* 3 (2)

1954

- ☐HI NO TORI/PHOENIX
- ☐TALES OF SUMMER GRASS
- ☐THE DESTROYER OF THE EARTH
- ☐THE DEVIL OF THE EARTH
- ☐BLACK CANYON
- ☐TANGE SAZEN
- ☐GOTO MATABEI
- ☐QUEEN NASUBI (-55)
- ☐WONDER-KUN (-55)
- ☐CHIEF DETECTIVE KENICHI (-56)

1955

- ☐TONKARA VALLEY
- ☐STORY (-56)
- ☐THE FAIRY OF STORM (-57)
- ☐SOYOKAZE-SAN (-56)
- ☐RED SNOW
- ☐LOST WORLD
- ☐STOUTLY KAZENOSHIN (-56)
- ☐THE FALL OF THE THIRD REICH
- ☐METEOR PRINCE
- ☐THE ANTENNA FAMILY

1956

- ☐PHOENIX (-57) * 5
- ☐FOUNTAIN OF CRANE
- ☐HIMAWARI-SAN
- ☐RAINBOW FORTRESS
- ☐BLACK COSMIC RAY
- ☐THE FUTURE HAS COME AND BE DESTROYED
- ☐ORION 137
- ☐GREEN CAT
- ☐SPACE AIRPORT
- ☐CARTOONIST SEMINAR ON BIOLOGY (-57)
- ☐RENT FOR SOLDIER
- ☐GUTCHAN
- ☐THE UNDERGROUND ROOM AT 7 AM

1957

- ☐THE DEVIL CAME TO THE DANCING PARTY
- ☐PINK ANGEL (-58)
- ☐MINIYON
- ☐KOKESHI DETECTIVE OFFICE
- ☐BATTLE AT HITOKUI CAPE
- ☐INCIDENT OF THE SPIDERS HOUSE
- ☐GAROP TERRITORY
- ☐ON THE WAVING BORDER
- ☐THE SKELETON SKIPPER
- ☐EARTHQUAKE PREDICTING OLD LADY
- ☐THE MULTIPLE-EYED DEVIL
- ☐TWIN MURDER CASE
- ☐THE RAG & THE JEWEL
- ☐HYOTAN KOMAKO (-58)
- ☐MYSTERIOUS THIEF Z (-58)#
- ☐THE WAR OF ULAMESIA
- ☐HELLO CHIPPO-KUN
- ☐BEEKO-CHAN
- ☐THE STRANGE JOURNEY
- ☐THE GOLDEN TRUNK

tant work as almost every reprint had panels that were changed and pages added or deleted. It's almost as if each version evolved from the last.

Many fans will recognize his *Tetsuwan Atom* series (*Astro Boy*), but a large part of the public hasn't yet seen what most consider his masterpiece *Hi No Tori* (*Phoenix*). This 11-volume set had its last continuing story completed and published very shortly before Tezuka's death. While the stories are all different and take place in very different

times and places, all concern characters who are forced to go beyond themselves for a single great purpose that would seem totally beyond their reach. Watching over them is the godlike Phoenix who alternately helps them and dispenses justice to wrongdoers. Still, there was always a message of hope that somehow made its voice heard among all the destruction and ruined dreams.

Continued on page 16

1964

- ☐THE GREAT ZEO
- ☐MY CARTOONS REPORT (-66)
- ☐THE REPORT OF EXPO NEW YORK
- ☐RABI-CHAN GOES TO THE MOON
- ☐STORY OF ANIMALS (-66)
- ☐DOVE FLIES UP TO HEAVEN (-67)

1965

- ☐AMBASSADOR MAGMA (-67) * 3
- ☐WONDER THREE (-66) * 3

1966

- ☐THE VAMPIRES (-67) * 3
- ☐FLYING BEN (-67) 3

1967

- ☐RALLY-UP MANKIND! (-68)
- ☐DORORO (-68) * 4
- ☐KIMBA THE WHITE LION
- ☐COM (#1)
- ☐CHRONICLES OF ASTRO BOY (-69)

1968

- ☐DILETTA (-69)
- ☐BURUNGA (-69)
- ☐GRAND DOLLS
- ☐NOMAN * 3
- ☐SWALLOWING THE EARTH (-69) B
- ☐THE VOICE OF NIGHT/ P
- ☐THE CLIFF OF DEATH/ P
- ☐GAM GAM PUNCH
- ☐GORO OF HATCHOIKE
- ☐THE EXECUTION IS OVER AT THREE O'CLOCK

1969

- ☐GENERAL ANIMARU
- ☐I.L. (-70) B
- ☐THE DUEL AT GRAND MESA/ P
- ☐CAPE UROKO/ P
- ☐THE HOLE/ P
- ☐STAR FOR EXILES/ P
- ☐CAMELEON/ P
- ☐TELEPHON/ P
- ☐THE CRATER (-70)
- ☐THE ADVENTURES OF RUBI (-70)
- ☐POCKACH
- ☐THE END OF GREEN
- ☐PECKS BANZAI
- ☐THE CAT'S BLOOD
- ☐I AM A CARTOONIST



Osamu Tezuka

1970

- ☐ DAUBERMAN
- ☐ EULOGY TO KIRI-HITO (-71) B
- ☐ CATASTROPHE IN THE DARK/ P
- ☐ ROVANNA/ P
- ☐ SPACE CAPSULE/ P
- ☐ HUMAN METAMORPHOSIS (-71) P#
- ☐ THE SONG OF APOLLO * 3
- ☐ ALABASTER (-71) 2
- ☐ BOMBA#
- ☐ YAKETPACHI'S MARIA
- ☐ RECORD OF THE GLASS CASTLE
- ☐ 21ST CENTURY ADVENTURE (-7)

1971

- ☐ TRANSPARENT BRAIN
- ☐ OTSUNE
- ☐ BIRDMAN ANTHOLOGY (-75)
- ☐ ONE HUNDRED STORIES
- ☐ WANSAN-KUN (-72)
- ☐ MARVELOUS MELMO (-72)

1972

- ☐ THE SPIRIT OF THE SWAMP
- ☐ THE LIPS OF SALOME/ B
- ☐ AYAKO (-73) B
- ☐ DUST 18* 1
- ☐ TORITON OF THE SEA * 4
- ☐ BUDDHA (-83)

1973

- ☐ AKUEMON
- ☐ BARUBORA (-74) B
- ☐ MICROID S
- ☐ THE EUPHRATES TREE (-74)
- ☐ BLACKJACK (-78) * 6

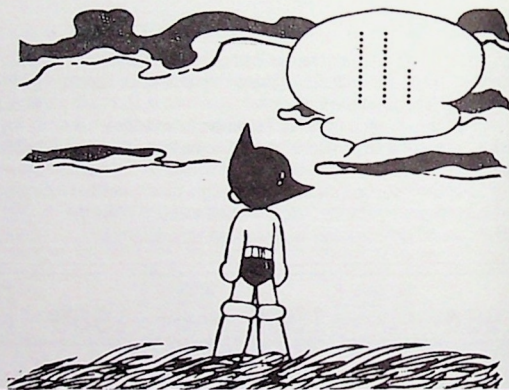
1974

- ☐ MELODY OF IRON (-75)
- ☐ IKKI MANDARA (-75)
- ☐ THE THREE-EYED ONE COMES HERE (-78)
- ☐ PAPER FORTRESS
- ☐ LUNATIC JAPAN (-75)
- ☐ SHUMARI (-76) * 4

1975

- ☐ THE STORY OF ISHI
- ☐ THE LONELY ANGE
- ☐ THE RAIN-MAKING BRAT
- ☐ YAJI AND ME
- ☐ THOUSAND AND ONE STORIES
- ☐ BAGI (-76)
- ☐ RAINBOW PRELUDE

In almost every story of any series, there would be some reference to the fact that the events did not occur in vain, that something was learned. Someone somewhere came out perhaps a bit wiser (sometimes, it would be the reader). There is also the belief that somehow science would save the day and fundamentally improve the human condition. Science, according to Tezuka, was not something to be feared and mistrusted. Rather, science is the great Magic and coupled with one pure of spirit anything could be achieved. This was Tezuka's legacy, even though science was unable to save his life. It was the hallmark of a genius whose pen is now still forever.



1982

- ☐ VOLCANIC ERUPTION
- ☐ PRIME ROSE (-83)
- ☐ DOG! GOG! DOG!
- ☐ SUSPICION

1983

- ☐ HANATARE PURE LAND
- ☐ SWEATER TROUBLE
- ☐ THE STORIES OF THREE ADOLPHS -

1984

- ☐ KIBANDO



40 Years of Comics

1976

- ☐ HORROR TALES OF YOTSUYA
- ☐ RUN CRONOS
- ☐ MW (-78)
- ☐ RESURRECTION OF ZAMZA
- ☐ THE HOUSE WHICH EVERYTHING IS ILLUSION
- ☐ BENKEI AND USHIKARA
- ☐ THE GREAT GENERAL GOES INTO THE FOREST
- ☐ WOBBIT
- ☐ FLYING RABBY

1977

- ☐ TEN TEKE MARCH
- ☐ TRIP TO HISTORIC EVENTS

1978

- ☐ THE BRIDGE OF KOROSUKE
- ☐ FUTUREMAN KAOS (-79)
- ☐ MY MOTHER'S ONCE UPON A TIME

1979

- ☐ THE TWO GENERALS
- ☐ MT. MON MON IS CRYING
- ☐ INSECT COLLECTOR
- ☐ DOTSUITARE (-80)
- ☐ DON DRACULA
- ☐ THE POOR LITTLE ELEPHANT
- ☐ MAKO, RUMI & CHI (-81)

1980

- ☐ YAMATARO COMES BACK
- ☐ UNICO (-84)
- ☐ ASTRO BOY (-81)
- ☐ IS HE A STRANGER?
- ☐ THE BEGGAR PRINCESS LUMPENELLA

1981

- ☐ INVITATION TO THE GROTESQUE
- ☐ RAINBOW PARAKEET (-82)
- ☐ FIGHT! DRAGON
- ☐ TEZUKA'S ANCESTOR DR. RYOAN -



Motion Pictures & Television

1962

A STORY OF THE STREET CORNER

1963

MIGHTY ATOM 1966
SPACE PATROL 1965

1965

NEW TREASURE ISLAND
WONDER THREE 1966
JUNGLE EMPEROR 1966

1966

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

1967

MONKEY KING PRINCESS
KNIGHT 1968
VAMPIRE 1969

1969

DORORO
1001 NIGHTS *

1969

DORORO
1001 NIGHTS *

1970

CLEOPATRA *

1971

MARVELOUS MELMO 1972

1973

WANSAN-KUN

1978

BANDER BOOK

1979

MARINE EXPRESS
PHOENIX *

1980

FUMON
MIGHTY ATOM 1981
PHOENIX 2772 *

1981

BREMEN 4

1983

PRIME ROSE
THE GREEN CAT
THE RAIN-MAKING BRAT

1984

JUMPING

Other Producers

1964

BIG X

1966

AMBASSADOR
MAGMA
(SPACE GIANTS)

1972

TRITON OF THE SEA

1973

MICROID S

1977

JETTER MARS

1981

UNICO



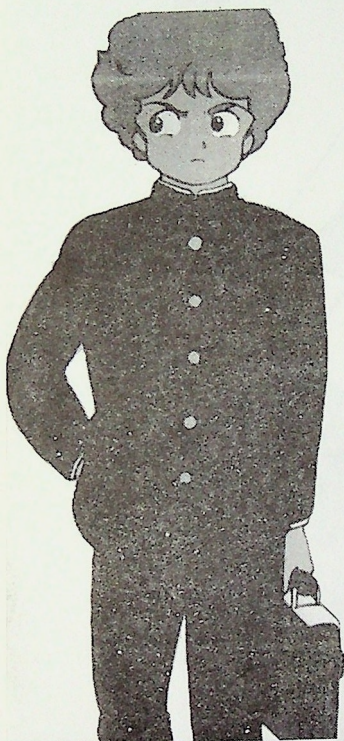
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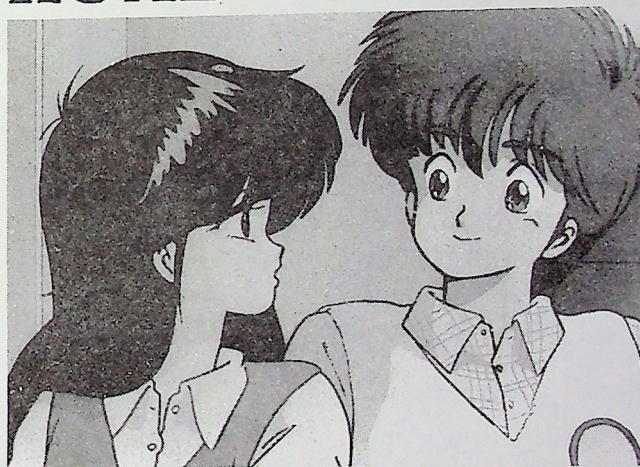


State Summer '90

Yusaku Hino



TAKE ME TO SUMMER SIDE: KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD

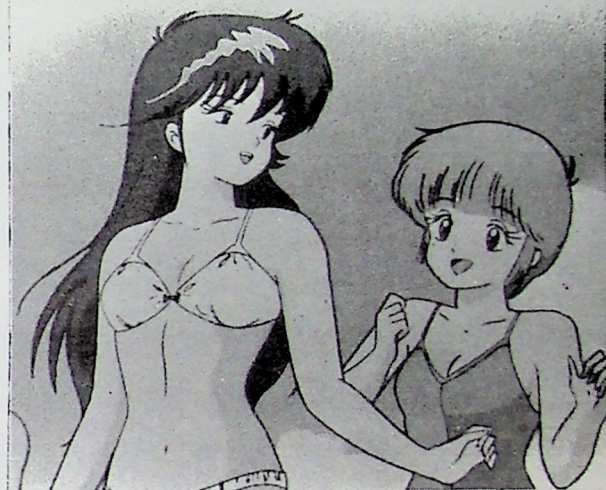
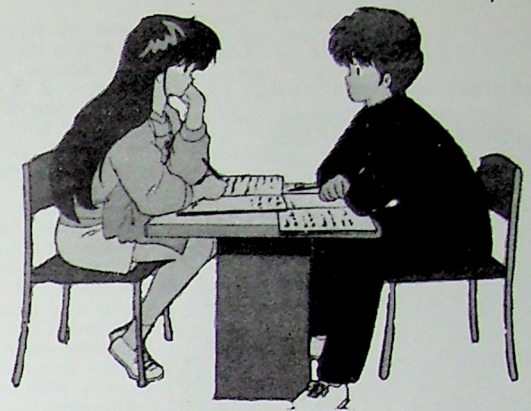
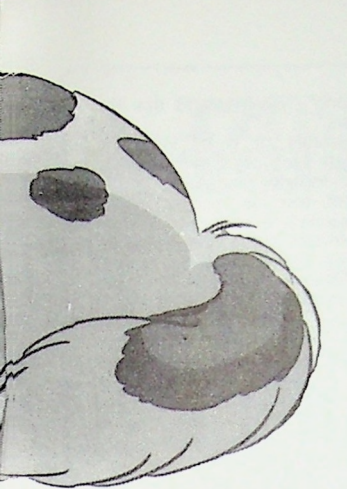


Once in a great while, a program appears that embraces the use of "limited animation", and shows us what can be done with a clever story idea and an excellent sense of timing. *Kimagure* (capricious) *Orange Road* is just such a show. Firmly in the tradition of shows like *Maison Ikkoku*, this somehow hits the mark quite often telling a story of adolescence that is strangely universal (sometimes unnerving so). The fact that most of the central characters are psionic is seldom used as an excuse for running out of ideas, and that is refreshing to say the least.

The only serious error made in the production of this show was it's promotion as yet another teenaged love-triangle with little else to distinguish it. Since we've been awash in these for an eternity, most fans seem to have just passed this by as yet more mindless tripe. Little could be further from the truth in fact. The show's characters (even fairly minor secondary ones) are quite three dimensional and easily empathized with. In a medium that typically introduces potentially interesting people and then ignores them, this stands out.

Kasuga Kyosuke is just an ordinary Japanese boy around 16 years old who has just moved into a strange new town trying to cope with all the problems most sixteen year-olds face...well, the problems most psionic 16 year-olds, anyway. His life is somewhat complicated by the fact that his family has spent most of it's collective existence moving from town to town, and this has certainly had an effect on him: he's once again left what few friends he's managed to acquire. About the only thing that is familiar and comfortable in his life right about now are his powerfully psionic younger twin (they are fraternal and not identical twin) sisters **Manami** and **Kurumi** (who spends a great deal of their time fighting), his totally non-psionic father, (who spends a great deal of his time in a befuddled state) and the family cat **Jingaro** (who usually winds up stealing the show). The reason for the bulk of their location shifts, by the way, are usually Kurumi doing something unusual. In this last instance, she ran the 100 meter dash in something like three seconds. As you might expect, behavior like this tends to draw attention to people. Kyosuke discourages the unrestrained use of psionics, but his sisters are younger and more easily bored, and after all, this is Big Brother talking. Since when do younger sisters listen to THAT?

Typically, series such as this have several important events that occurred before the show actually began that are told gradually by way of flashback and the offhand remark. Kyosuke's mother, for example, has died due to some illness only hinted at throughout the series. It's known to be some sort of respiratory illness (most likely lung cancer), but this is hardly unusual as most females who die quietly in animation do so from lung ailments. When Kyosuke



discovers that the girl of his dreams (whom he falls in love with moments after he meets) in a cigarette smoker, he resolves to show her the error of his ways and immediately pays the price for doing so.

This girl of Kyosuke's dreams is named **Madoka Ayukawa**, a half American saxophone player who is generally "known" to be trouble by her peers. Her dramatic exclusion and unpopularity is at least partly due to her being "burakumiin", almost literally an unperson due to her not being of purely Japanese blood. She's doubtlessly defended herself from all sorts of nastiness throughout her life, and to this end she's become rather competent in all manner of battle (ie: Karate, fistfighting, etc.). She's been quite alone so when Kyosuke starts to get close to her the reaction is quite interesting. A sane and rational person would have left and done so quickly, but Kyosuke is deeply in love. It is this profound love for Madoka that blinds Kyosuke to the fact that another person has attached herself in a leech like fashion to him.

Were it not for **Hikaru Hiyama**, everything would be all peachy in this relationship. Hikaru is a girl much like CKo Kotobuki in persona (with the exception that Hikaru likes boys!), and has become Madoka's shadow after an incident when they were both children. This proximity to Madoka was the primary cause of Hikaru's "confusion" about Kyosuke's true feelings on the matter. Kyosuke is much too nice a guy to say anything early on, and by the time that he realizes his error, the damage is far too widespread to be easily corrected. Over time, Kyosuke does grow more fond of Hikaru, but it's never to the degree that Hikaru loves him. Hikaru, like most "children" seems almost totally unaware that her behavior brings out the worst in people. She leads people on to expect things that she has no intention of delivering on, and when people get upset at this she seems surprised.

Just about all topics have been tried at one time or another in terms of story ideas. Each of the central characters have gotten at least a single episode to themselves, even Jingaro! Powerful elements are freely and effectively used throughout the series: important clues to Kyosuke's thoughts are told as a series of still photographs (his father is a photographer and his perceptions are skewed in terms of pictures). In fact, most of the shows end with a particularly strong image in still photograph form (fighting with Jingaro over a particular hat's possession for instance). Another powerful element would certainly be Madoka playing the Saxophone (Saxophones are usually employed when the directors wish the audience to know that the player is at least partly American) when she is troubled (it would seem that the sounds of her playing are heard all over town as the echoes are omnipresent). Another good element would doubtlessly be Madoka's red hat hanging in a place of reverence in Kyosuke's room.

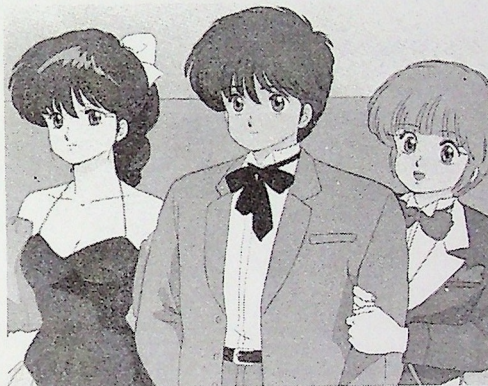
It was this hat that precipitated the relationship between Madoka and Kyosuke, and this hat becomes a symbol that continues throughout the series and OVA set.

Of course, this isn't nearly enough for a series run of 48 episodes...or is it? With the exception of a few minor characters who show up midway through the series, that's really about it. We've Yusaku Hinoo, a past boyfriend of Hikaru (and seemingly Madoka as well), Kyosuke's faithful grandmother and somewhat lecherous grandfather (on his mother's side; they're quite psionic!), a trouble-making cousin Kazuya (also quite psionic), a pair of neighbors who are desperately trying to be alone, and two of Kyosuke's schoolmates (Hata and Komatsu) who are rather unsavory habitually hitting on Kyosuke's sisters. The series revolved around Madoka's eventual acceptance of the situation, allowing her guard to drop, and kiss Kyosuke, and in reality that was about it. When this much awaited kiss occurs in episode 48, there is still one situation left unresolved, and that is the problem with Hikaru. That complication's resolution was left to the feature film (To go back to that day), and that resolution is a unique one indeed. I'll not spoil this film for someone who hasn't seen it yet, but I will say that after seeing it, I actually felt sorry for Hikaru.

In brief, this show is much more than the "anime" magazines showed. It's a show that communicates very well if the viewer doesn't happen to speak Japanese. It has a strong national identity (Japanese), yet it seldom alienates a non-Japanese viewer. This is at least as rare as it sounds. With many current shows running back through huge plotlines and complicated relationships, here is a simple love story that seldom runs into mediocrity. It's well worth more than a cursory look.

WALTER HIGGINS

Manami (who usually wears glasses).



Center: Madoka, Kyosuke and Hikaru.



Komatsu and Hata chastising Kyosuke.



Hikaru

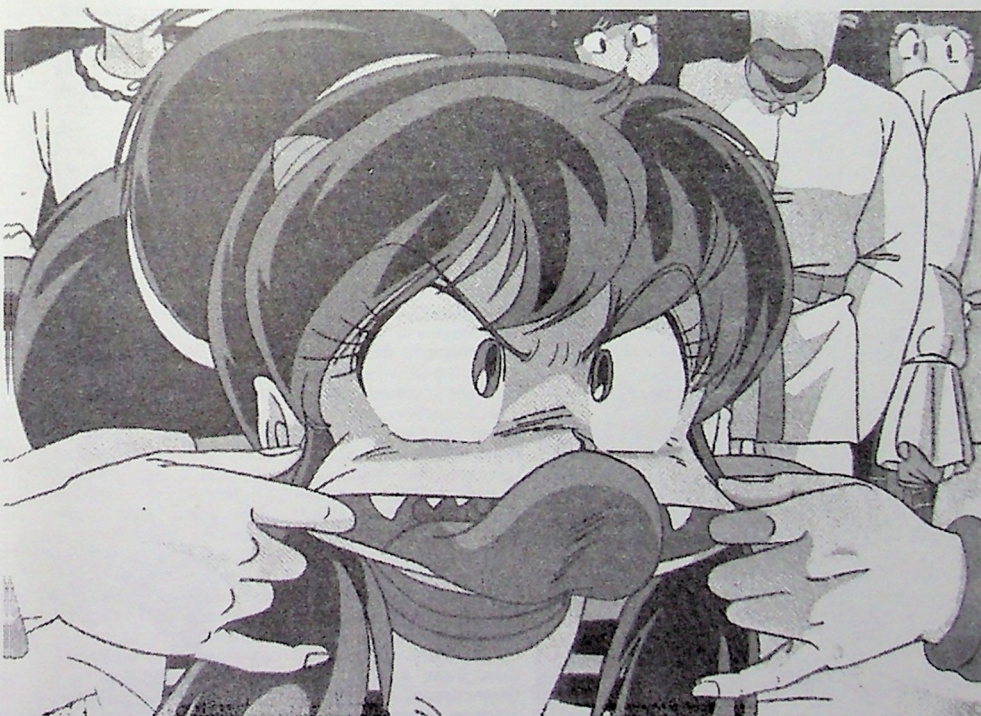
THERE'S MORE TO THIS SHOW THAN JUST TIGER STRIPES

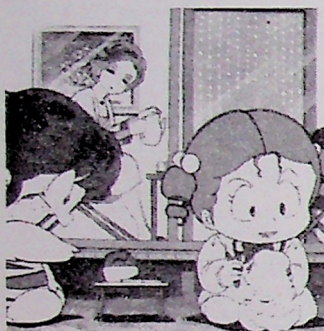
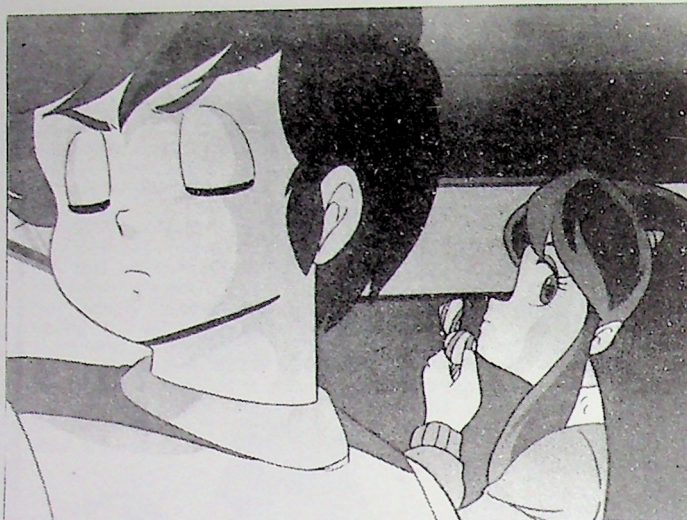


Back in 1981, a show began on Japanese television called *Urusei Yatsura*. "So what" you might say, "Many shows started in 1981". On this particular Tuesday evening, the television audience was introduced to a most unusual cast featuring assorted lunatics from this world and several others. By the time the series drew to a close, it has aired 218 episodes, spawned no less than five theatrical films, a series of OVA releases, and made the name **Rumiko Takahashi** a household name in Japan.

This TV series like many Japanese animated TV series began life as a series of manga in the popular weekly *Shonen Sunday* series. It's author **Rumiko Takahashi** (creator of *Maison Ikkoku*, *Firetripper*, *Super Gal*, *Laughing Target*, *Gospel of One Pound*, etc.) is one of the more recognized artists in manga today. Currently working on her latest project *Ranma Nibun no Ichi* (a show that features a fellow who changes spontaneously into a female martial artist), one is forced to wonder about this girl. Most writers work from experiences that they've had, and if this is the case here, it's got to be the best reason not to live in Japan that I've ever heard.

Just about everyone who has picked up an animation magazine in the last nine years, or walked into a comic store in the last year has seen **Lum**, one of the most recognizable characters ever drawn in comic form. She is a green haired alien girl who sports tiny horns, and a most fashionable tiger-striped bikini (complete with go-go boots). For the benefit of those off the planet for the last eight years, I'll also mention here that she flies through the air and throws rather substantial lightning bolts at those who annoy her. She also has rather a "thing" about a certain earth-male named **Ataru Moroboshi**.





Jaraten and his attempted wife.

At first glance, Ataru Moroboshi is a normal appearing fellow who starts out something around 16 years old. Please note that I said only normal "appearing". Ataru (literally "to hit upon") was born on Friday the 13th, a particularly unlucky day as not only did the family Buddhist shrine come crashing off the wall, but black cats were in evidence all over the neighborhood. He has to be one of the least faithful males ever to

walk on two legs, and his exploits have become so famous as to create the newest pastime of watching the Moroboshi home to see what's going to happen next. This pastime could probably be considered a very rewarding one as there is a quite steady stream of incredible things happening there even before the aliens arrive. Cries of "It's all Moroboshi's fault!" are very common around Tomobiki. Curiously, it usually IS Moroboshi's

fault somehow as this boy has an uncanny knack for getting into trouble although it's not always entirely his own doing. For the record, it should be stated that he'll chase anything with less than three legs that's wearing a skirt, and in this Takahashi universe there are lots of females with less than three legs wearing skirts. Naturally, our resident alien Lum will not sit idly by and watch. She instead will usually resort to her electric personality to make her position on this clear.



We (the television audience) got our first taste of these folks with an episode called "I'm Lum, the Notorious". Ataru has been selected by random computer drawing to battle the ambassador of Tiger Star in a contest that will determine the long-term fate of Earth. Should the selected Earth Man lose this contest, the aliens will arrive in a less than pleasant manner, but if Ataru can win, they go home peacefully. The terms of the contest are quite simple: Ataru has to grab the horns of the alien ambassador's head within a ten-day time frame. Ataru, initially reluctant, begins to warm to the idea when he learns that his opponent will be none other than Lum (less than three legs...). His then-current girlfriend Shinobu (translating to "to put up with") then



1 高橋留美子

Shonen Sunday Comics



Cherry and Sakura





attempts to separate his face from his skull as he begins to drool at the prospect of getting close to this newest challenge.

On day one, Ataru and Lum take their respective marks. As the starting pistol fires, Ataru discovers that Lum can in fact fly. Screaming foul, Ataru then tries all sorts of interesting strategies to gain his objective but as the days pass things look more and more bleak. On the evening of the ninth day, Shinobu offers her hand in marriage if Ataru can save the Earth from the alien horde. Charged with new-found purpose, he uses a clever bit of hardware and some good old (Japanese) ingenuity to bait Lum in close enough to grab her by the horns scant moments before time expires. Grinning and laughing like a fool, he babbles incoherently about now being able to get married, and Lum takes this to mean that Ataru is proposing to her. Delighted by this idea, she readily accepts in front of all the world's TV cameras and news organizations. Shinobu, furious at what she perceives to be Ataru

cheating on her once again, leaves him to his newest conquest. When he begins to protest Lum then promptly shows him one of the other interesting things about Tiger Star resident's physiology (the electric shock). The interesting part is that this entire incident happens in less than fifteen minutes, and it's only the first taste of the show.

For many people reading this, the above is common knowledge. Here comes the interesting parts, though.

Just about everyone who has seen the show or picked up the magazines knows who Lum is. It's no accident that the translation of the manga is marketed under the title *Lum/Urusei Yatsura*, and some fans even refer to the show itself as *Lum* (the title more accurately translated to *Those Obnoxious Aliens*, but is itself a Japanese pun). Rest assured, however, that there is considerably more going on in this show than just Lum and Ataru running about. They are in fact flanked by one of the best casts in any show of recent memory. With at least ten major char-

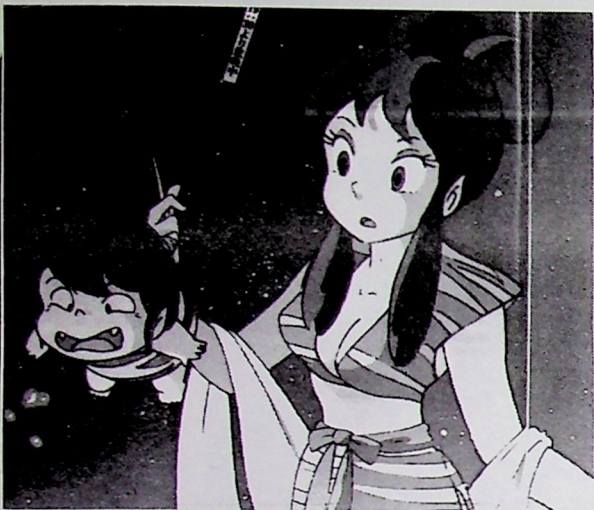


acters, it's tough to get bored by the series. Not all of them wear the tiger stripes, either.

Let's begin with Shinobu, Ataru's ex-girlfriend. Her appearance is also somewhat deceiving as she is a typical uniformed schoolgirl who possesses herculean strength. She's less annoyed with Lum

than she probably should be, but is quite annoyed at Ataru for jilting her (yet again...). Early in the first year (somewhere around episode 30), she encounters a fellow named Shutaro (Shutaro translates to "annoying") who is the only son of the super-rich Mendo family. Words cannot accurately convey just





Lan

how rich this fellow is, but among his interesting possessions are his own Harrier V/STOL jet and a substantial private army (patterned after Nazi Germany's). Shutaro has always gotten exactly what he wanted through the use of this enormous wealth, but as our show progresses he finds something that he cannot own: Lum. To compensate for this, he begins to date Shinobu, but not for any real feeling for the girl. He's perfectly willing to do this in order to irritate Ataru (who still does care about her in a warped sort of way) and perhaps free up Lum for himself. Still, as the years pass he becomes more interested in Shinobu as a person, and becomes more serious about her (For Takahashi series, this behavior is typical). While he never really forgets about Lum, by the end of the series he seems resigned to the fact that he cannot possess her.

As you might have already noticed, Ataru and Shutaro mix about as well as oil and water. They contrast in personality almost as well as they contrast in appearance. Ataru, the unwashed and unkempt

cretin as Shutaro is the immaculate white clad sword-wielding cretin. One of the interesting things is that Shutaro is at least as big a lecherous person as Ataru but since he's rich enough he rarely has to concern himself with the consequences. He's also deeply in love with Sakura (and most other females). Shutaro carries an ancient family sword with him (habitually drawn) in order to simplify the problems that he encounters on a day to day basis (like the dark). Shutaro's fear of the dark, by the way, is due to a peculiar experience he has as a child. While hiding inside a large bell, a sword-wielding maniac approached screaming "I'll kill you" to an unseen foe. This person, of course, was Shutaro himself who had travelled back in time during the course of the show (still frightened of the dark).

While Shutaro Mendo is the only son of the family and thus has an elevated place in society, he is not the only member of the family that we must contend with. He does in fact have a sister Ryoko who is quietly elegant in beautiful

kimono. Ryoko has always felt somewhat shortchanged by being born both second and female as this almost certainly prevents her from assuming her position as head of the family. As you might imagine, this causes her to detest her brother deeply. To keep things from getting too boring around the house (with the multitudinous servants, there's not a whole lot that one has to do), she's become a more than competent magic-user. The age-old rationale applies very well here: you really don't want a bored magic-user annoyed at you as it could be most unhealthy. The complicating factor is that while she is sister to Shutaro, she's not above having him meet with an untimely accident that places her in control of the family, but outwardly she must maintain this charade of sisterly love.

Tobimaru and Shutaro Mendo's families have known each other for many years as they both travelled in the same circles (they are both fantastically wealthy). This is not to say that Shutaro and Ton-San are anything more than



Shutaro Mendo

slight acquaintances, and frequently dire enemies. Most of the sour feeling was caused during a bitterly contested baseball game which Tonsan (with what many felt were superior abilities) lost. Although he is a veritable baseball samurai and tremen-

she dearly loves her brother, she is frightened beyond reason of MEN. She's been known to go on rampages tearing up the countryside screaming for her brother to come save her although she hardly needs his help. Of all the women in

he masters the very difficult floor-wall-ceiling shot cycle.

On the afternoon that Lum arrived via tiger-striped flying saucer, there were more than the usual complement of watchers maintaining their distance from the Moroboshi

(could these events be the doing of an angered God?). He feels (probably rightly in a warped sort of way) that his spiritual guidance is needed by the Moroboshi house, but the larger reason is no doubt the unending stream of free food.

Alien strangeoids with her and none of them are as "ordinary" as our Earthlings mentioned thus far.

When they were both children on Tiger Star, Lum and Lan got along famously, but when things went wrong Lum would make sure

Ryunosuke & Benten

Inabe and Shinobu



dously strong, he is an acrophobe, frightened beyond reason of heights. Realizing this shortcoming, he's been trying somewhat unsuccessfully to cure himself of this by tree-sitting when it's convenient. One has only to look about for the ladders pointing to occupied trees. While Tonsan is an interesting case to be sure, many would feel that his sister is even more so. Asuka (Flying Bird) is another of the more-or-less normal looking ladies from this show (at least, normal looking from a distance anyway). She has brown hair tied up with a large pink ribbon (nothing odd there). The fact that she seldom ventures out in public without some sort of armor sometimes has a tendency to draw some attention to her. Even without the armor, if one can get close enough to her to look into her eyes (before being beaten into a pulp), one could see that she shares her somewhat unusual eyes with both her brother and her mother (she has crosses for pupils). Asuka, like her brother, also has an interesting phobia although her's is not for heights. While

Urusei Yatsura, she is doubtless the strongest, and that says quite a bit. Sadly, of all the regular and semi-regular characters in the show, Asuka is undoubtedly the most overlooked in the publicity department.

Next comes Jaraten. Contrary to popular beliefs, he is neither Lum's son or brother but is in fact her cousin from Tiger Star. Lacking Lum's ability to throw the electric charge, he compensates for this by breathing fire at his foes (usually Ataru). Jaraten isn't very happy about the object of Lum's affection, so there is naturally a running battle going on between the two of them. Early in the series the battle is rather one sided for as Ataru gets off a particularly nasty insult, the result is incineration. As the show progressed though, Ataru decides that an innovation is required and thus employs an ingenious anti-Jaraten device: a frying pan. This heavy iron frying pan functions as both a shield against the heat and a fly swatter (Jaraten also flies, you see). Near the end of the series, Ataru's competence with this weapon is remarkable as

home as they knew full well that where Ataru goes trouble soon follows. Sensing something that would change their lives was about to happen, Megane (translates to "glasses") and the UFO club (Chibi, Palmer, Kakugari) took up positions and were pleased beyond words that an honest to goodness alien has decided to take up residence on Earth. Although they were not introduced in the first tv installment, they did indeed make an appearance (on the news, they ask Ataru where their money is). Immediately they collectively decided to change both the name and focus of their group from the "UFO CLUB" to the "Lum Guards". This is indeed rather strange considering the fact the Lum seems quite capable of taking care of herself. In addition to the above in attendance on that fateful day was Sakuranbo ("Cherry") the itinerant Buddhist Priest. Cherry was, in fact, the first to mention to Ataru that he had the "star of suffering" on his back. His reward for this information was to be clubbed into submission by his own staff by dear Ataru

Before we leave Cherry as a character, we've also got to take a look at his Niece Sakura (Cherry Blossom). Sakura is, shall we say, a budding Shinto Priestess who keeps body and soul together by working at Tomobiki High as the school nurse. On the day that she arrived at School, she was wearing the now-famous purple dress (the one that defies several laws of Physics). This outfit caused most of the male students in the school (you guessed it, Ataru WAS there) to report with a wide array of unusual ailments (and probably a few nosebleeds as well). While she has been seeing a fellow named Tsubame for some time, this does not stop either Shutaro Mendo and a teacher named On-San Mark (literally: Steam) from fantasizing about her hourly. The standing joke about Tsubame and Sakura is everyone trying to catch them in the midst of a kiss.

Do you think we've got a big enough cast yet? For most shows, yes, but this is no normal show. When Lum arrived on Earth, she brought a large group of

that the blame fell on Lan somehow. It wasn't until Lan was dating an alien named Lei that things started to get messy: Lum stole him away without even thinking about it. This naturally infuriated Lan who then swore revenge on her one-time best friend, but she'll not take it out on her directly. Lum stole the object of her affection away, so she'll return the favor in kind. At her first opportunity, she'll take the object of Lum's affection (Ataru) and during a passionate kiss suck the youth (!) out of his mouth leaving him an old man. Lum will stop at nothing to keep these two apart, but Lan is another of the rather attractive female types in town and we already know how Ataru feels about women. Lan is also rather interesting since her personality undergoes a series of changes as the show progressed. She finally wound up more-or-less with two diametrically opposite types that alternated from moment to moment. Type (1) is the frilly girlish one, the "all's right with the world, isn't it beautiful out today?" one. Type (2) is the "I'll kill any-

Ryunosuke and Dad



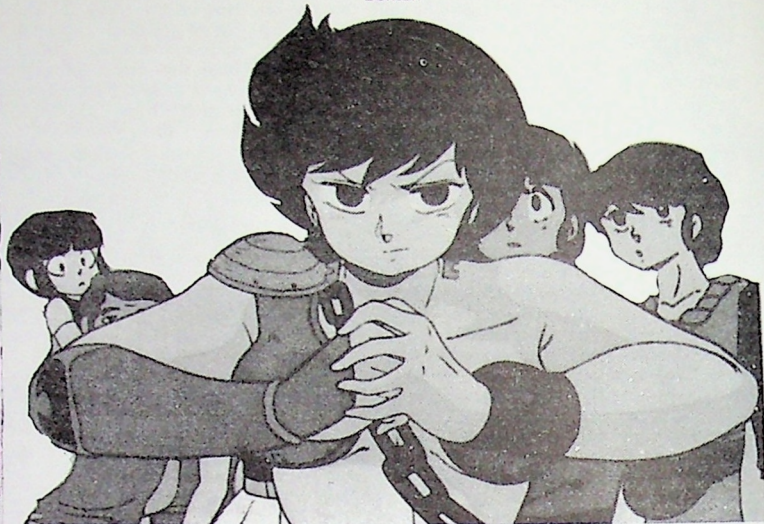
thing that might breed and have it's offspring on the same planet as I am" one. Type 2 became the dominant one toward the end of the series run with Lan equipping herself with the very latest in mostly-portable artillery. All I can say is that it isn't just ANY girl who lifts her frilly dress edge to uncover potato masher grenades!

By comparison to the others, Lan gets a great deal of screen time. She is (of course) not the only other female that must be contended with in *Urusei Yatsura*. For example, in episode 16, a freak spatial warp develops that transports most of our cast to a frozen area seemingly ruled over by a girl in a white kimono. This girl's name is Oyuki (Snow Queen), and while she almost never gets angry, the few instances that she has have been quite dramatic. She becomes a semi-regular cast member after her appearance, and it is a mark of her abilities that Ataru seems to attack her much less frequently than the other ladies. Next, consider for a moment Kurama-hime (Princess Kurama). Like Oyuki, Kurama becomes a semi-regular cast member after her introduction (the instance of

it was very much like Lum's in episode 1). Kurama comes from a planet and a race of birds, and is herself the result of genetic engineering to create an ambassador for Earth. When she awakens, we discover that she's not very happy about the selection of available males to make err... "contact" with. Naturally, she winds up choosing Ataru (well, more or less anyway), and as you might expect, there is considerable voltage flying about from you know who. There is also Benteen who is probably Lum's only true friend. Benteen seems to be almost deliberately ignored by most people who review *Urusei Yatsura* which is somewhat unusual. She's always attired in chains and stainless steel, and usually rides a rocket motorcycle through the countryside (this wouldn't draw a bit of attention to her, you know). In personality, she's can probably best be summed up as a Biker with a "you'd best get out of my way" attitude. While she shares her name with a traditional god of Good Luck, the similarity ends with that (this one doesn't even carry the requisite Lute!).

Let's not forget about Ryunosuke and her father, either. The basis for Ranma and HIS father, Ryunosuke is a girl who was raised as a boy by her father who felt that girls were flighty and unreliable. She was therefore raised as a male and taught the art of self defense by example. Since this has been going on for many years now, she is now quite capable of duking it out with the old man and winning a good percentage of the time. Her father loves the Sea (and has a T-shirt to prove it), and loves to pick fights with his daughter. Not to worry though, for as we mentioned before, Ryunosuke can defend herself quite well. Ryunosuke is also notable since she becomes the object of Asuka's affection after a stormy introduction. Asuka (afraid of men) seems on the verge of a battle-to-the-death with Ryunosuke when Ryunosuke abruptly reveals herself to be a female. This bizarre turn of events is just the thing to solve the problem of fearing men and still dating: Asuka seemingly "loves" Ryunosuke, forgetting the previously arranged marriage (it never took place) to Shutaro Mendo.

Benteen



Ryoko Mendo

Lei



Shinobu

Space Cab driver



Now that we know most of the regular cast, we can discuss unusual things. Go ahead...laugh.

Urusei Yatsura had, in addition to the regular bunch of folks, one-shot characters who were easily interesting enough to be regular characters on any other show. There was Kintaro, a little girl in love with Jaraten (it's indeed refreshing to see Jaraten getting a bit of his own medicine from Ataru). There is Wendy, the blonde spiritual librarian from a library where the books all come to life one fine day. There is Amefurashi, an Earth Spirit who wanders about creating rainstorms and making cursed people's lives miserable. There is Yuki, a cat spirit who was a human girl in her past life. There is the occasional character Kotatsu Neko, a ghost cat from the Edo period who hovers around electric heaters. One episode of the show features Lan and Lum's teacher from *Tiger Star*, the computer CAO-2. There is a Space Taxi driver who resembles nothing so much as a blue shmoo with a very short temper. There is a small harlequin from a mirror dimension who arrives in Ataru's

bedroom after midnight who shares Ataru's behavior. Jaraten's mother shows up from time to time as do Lum's parents (Lum's father is, by the way, the size of a small elephant). Walking, talking plants, Giants, Dwarves, Japanese demons, Dragons, Aliens, there all in here someplace. This doesn't even begin to mention the steady stream of girls that Ataru routinely lusts after who decorate the scenery.

Now, one would think that for a show this popular that there would be an utterly incredible amount of coverage in the animation magazines of the period. Surprisingly however, it's coverage was largely supplanted by things like *Macross* and *Gundam* with *Urusei* getting only single pages and a few two page spreads. If you count up all the covers of *Animage* alone, you'll find quite a discrepancy. There isn't an *Urusei Yatsura* Roman Album although there would be quite a market for one. There aren't even two episode guides that agree on the assignment of weekly episodes as opposed to tv specials. Sadly, the only real guide to the show was in the *Shonen Sunday*

Graphic series, and these have been out of print for some time. Honestly, I don't know anyone who has a complete set of them, and even they stop long before the episodes did.

To show just how wide this show's appeal is, ask someone who says that they didn't like the show and who'll give you an honest answer as to just what they thought about the soundtrack music. The vast majority will grudgingly admit that it was consistently some of the best written for an animation series. The reason for this is simple: Kitty Film and Kitty Record are (as you might expect) divisions of the same group. Kitty Record, having many assorted talents under their collective roof, delegated the music to a large pool of very talented folks with the results frequently being brilliant. There are albums (*Hit Parades 1* and *2*, *Symphony*, etc.), the movie soundtracks (all five on LP and CD), and the *Juke Box* series (1 and 2) along with the *Music File* (a two CD set) on Compact Disc. I cannot recommend any of these too highly as each is worth the tremen-

Ataru after Lum has left him.



dously inflated price several times over.

Did I mention movies? There are five actual theatrical releases at the moment: *Only You, Beautiful Dreamer*, *Remember my Love*, *Lum the Forever*, *Urusei Yatsura Final* aka *Boy Meets Girl*, and a series of Original Video Animation featurettes. With the exception of *Urusei Yatsura Final*, none of the stories appeared in any other form prior to the release of the films, so the audience really had no idea what was going to happen THIS time before the final curtain dropped. Afterwards, there emerged *Anime Comics* (two volumes each) for the first four (as well as *Shonen Sunday Graphics*), and a *Shonen Sunday Graphic Special* (it's oversized) for the final installment.

Here's another measure of just how popular the show was over it's run. It had no less than six sets of opening credits and NINE sets of closing credits. Each was different from the previous (with the exception that each featured Lum, and usually Lum dancing somewhere), but each interesting in it's own oddball way. Most people prefer the "Rock

the Planet" opener for reasons which become obvious very quickly). As is typical for a Japanese TV series, each of the songs for the openers is available on a 45 rpm record in a remixed form, and for those hardcore historians and collectors (like myself), the sequences themselves are available on a special Laser Vision collection called (appropriately enough), *TV Titles*.

Now, for those of you who feel quite the expert on *Urusei Yatsura*, try this on for size.

1) Lum is shy.

That's right. Shy. The girl who's wardrobe consists of tiger-striped bikini's and go-go boots. Yes, shy. Go back and watch episode number 42 and observe her reaction as everyone in class thinks that Lum and Ataru stayed up all night doing something they didn't (they played cards, by the way). As Shutaro goes through the roof, Lum gets more than a bit flushed at the idea. While she puts on a wonderful act to Ataru, there is another side that takes a bit of effort to find.

2) Why is everyone trying to kill Ataru just as he kisses Lum?

Ataru professes to everyone, and I mean



everyone that he doesn't care one whit about Lum, yet every time they catch him unawares, he's scant moments away from lip-lock. This enrages the cast (if he doesn't care, why is he doing this? More to the point, why can't THEY??). This generates more than a bit of hostility (most really don't like Ataru under ideal conditions), and such the implied death sentence.

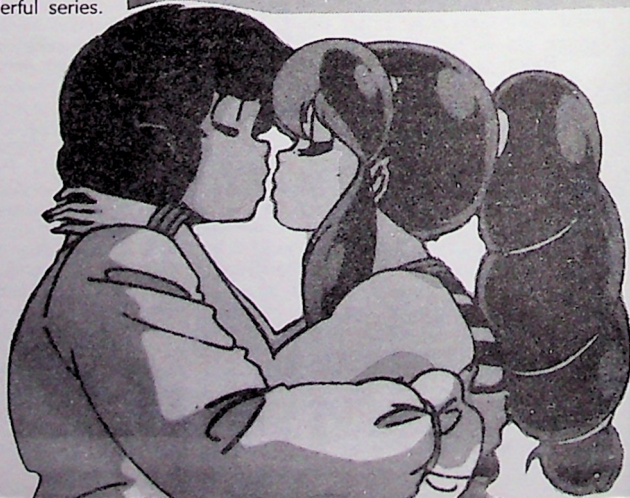
3) How does Ataru REALLY feel about Lum?

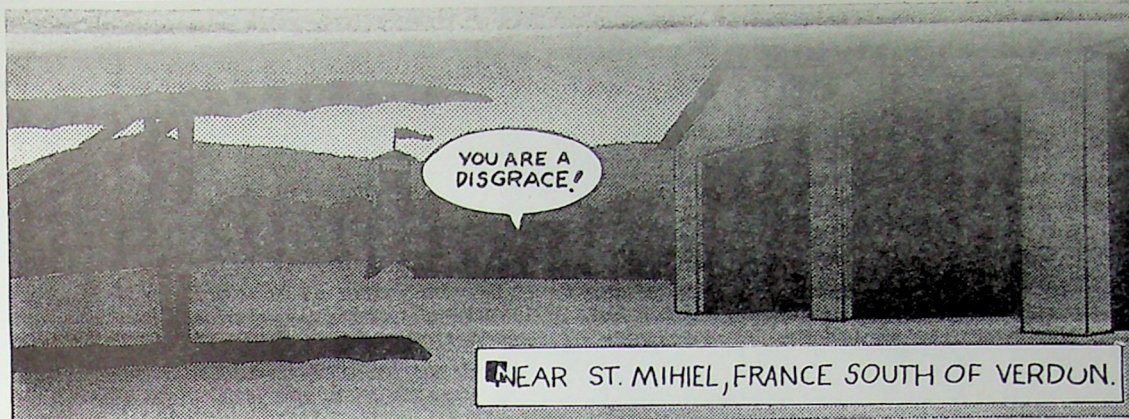
This is the biggie, the one question that everyone (including Lum) would really like the answer to. Ataru cares for this girl far, far more than he'd like to think about. He naturally realized just how Lum felt about him, yet for reasons no one other than Rumiko Takahashi could say for certain he stays mute. Theories range from Ataru not being able to make up his mind (highly unlikely) to him not being able to face up to the responsibility for the commitment that he must make (more than a bit of truth in this). Growing up is frequently used as a plot development in Japanese animation with shows like *Space Cruiser Yamato* and *Galaxy Express 999*. The maturation of a central character is typically used as the backbone of such a series, and this may be the Rosetta stone of *Urusei Yatsura*. Personally, I suspect

that it is simply that Lum does not present the challenge that other women Ataru's chased do. Every other female, forewarned, is trying to duck him at every turn, yet Lum chases him down relentlessly, all the while professing her undying love to him. Overactive glands or the lack of a challenge, we'll never really know for sure.

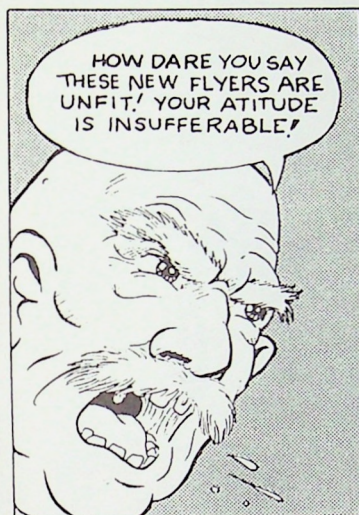
As I mentioned earlier, there were four years worth of episodes, five movies, and a series of made-for-tape releases, but there is still one final question very deliberately left unanswered: WHAT FINALLY HAPPENS? In manga reprint volume 2 (English Anime comic #2 as well as Viz's Lum #5), there is a story called "Future Shock" (Viz called it "We Are The Children"). This is an early volume which details one of Ataru's travels through time, this one emerging twenty years into the future. He meets his own son: Kokuro Moroboshi, and his son is carrying on the family tradition of groping the local females. Lum, following close behind, discovers to her horror that Kokuro does not have horns on his head; he's most assuredly NOT her son! Ataru does make an attempt to see his future wife, but fails to find out that she's none other than Shinobu. Now, this story was in a VERY early volume, and it's entirely possible

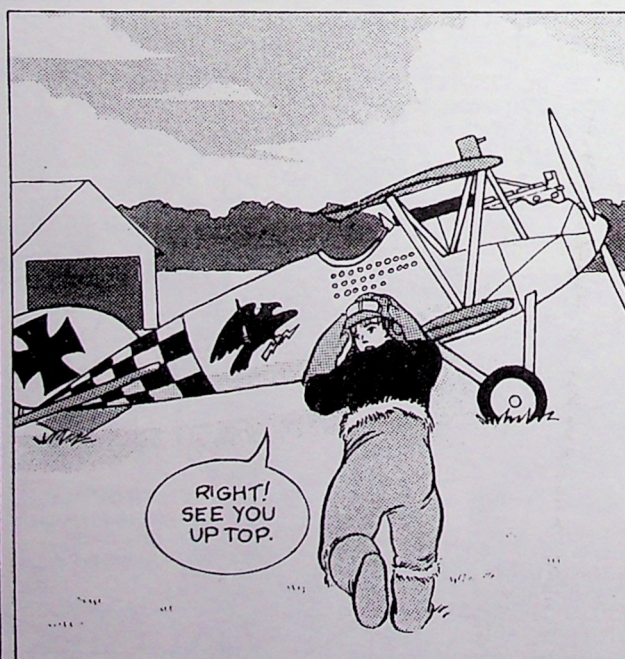
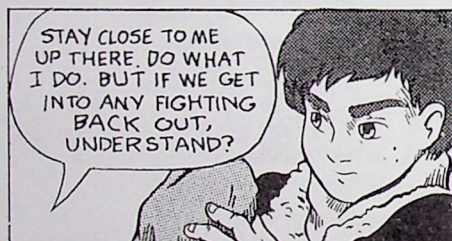
that the idea was scrapped. In the made-for-tape *Urusei Yatsura '87*, Rumiko Takahashi explains this away as a possible future for Ataru, Shinobu, and Lum, but not necessarily the only one. There are, as explained during the story, many possible paths that the future can take with one of them the marriage of Ataru and Lum (we DO see that, by the way as well as a few hysterically funny alternate futures). Does Lum marry Ataru? Does she instead wind up marrying Shutaro Mendo, and Ataru wind up marrying Shinobu? If Ataru DOES marry Shinobu, what about the character of Inabe-San (an apprentice time-bunny introduced in *Urusei '87*, Shinobu's boyfriend? Unfortunately, *Urusei Yatsura Final* seems to be the last movie, and the new made-for-tape productions don't address the problem. The final TV episode does not touch on this either, but does finally show Ataru kiss Lum (he FINALLY does) as everything dissolves into madness. It's deliberately left in the air, but this much is certain: it was meant to end this way. The final end credit song "Good Luck" is far too much of a coincidence for it not to be planned that way. The show instead ends as it began: utter chaos. A final free-for-all that is perhaps the perfect mirror for a show such as this. Attempting to make sense out of it all is not only difficult, but takes away from this truly wonderful series.



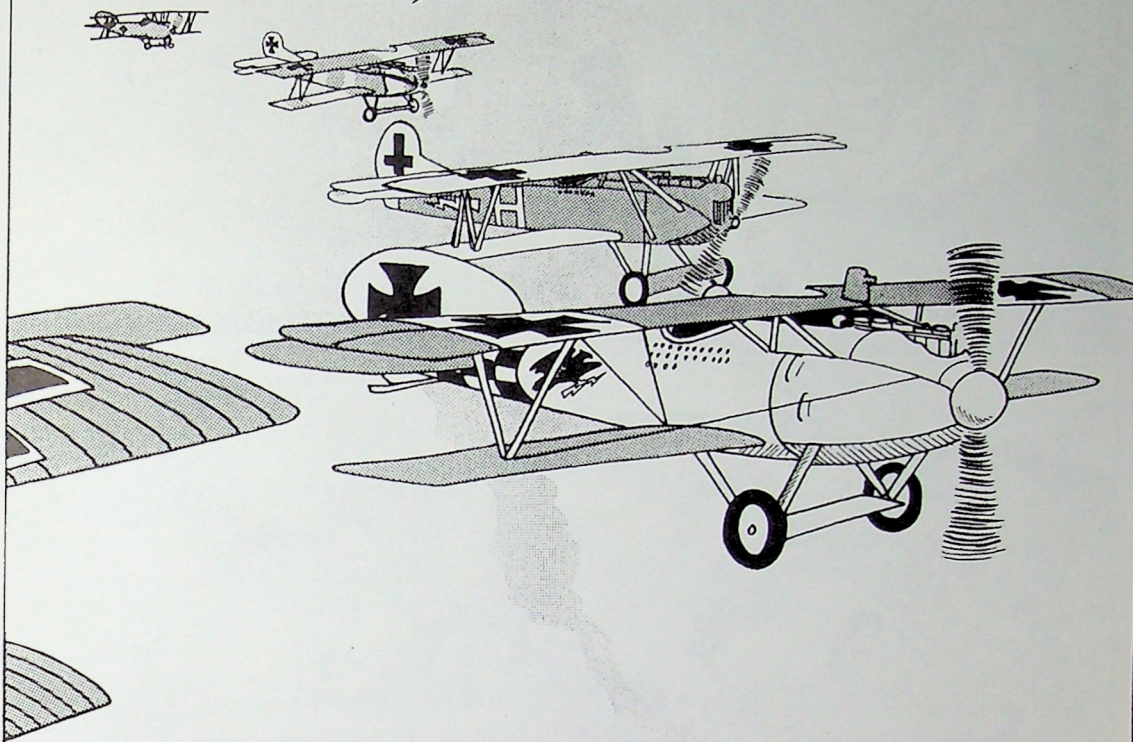


WEAR ST. MIHIEL, FRANCE SOUTH OF VERDUN.



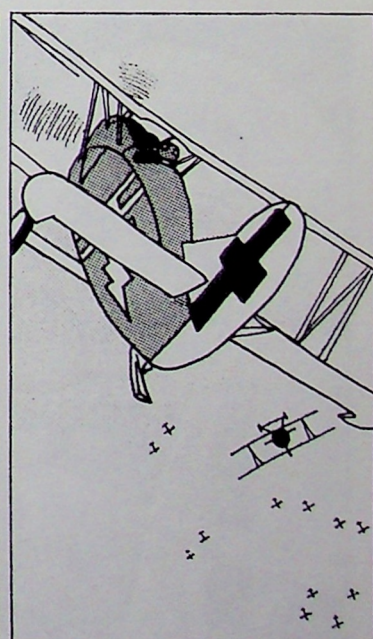
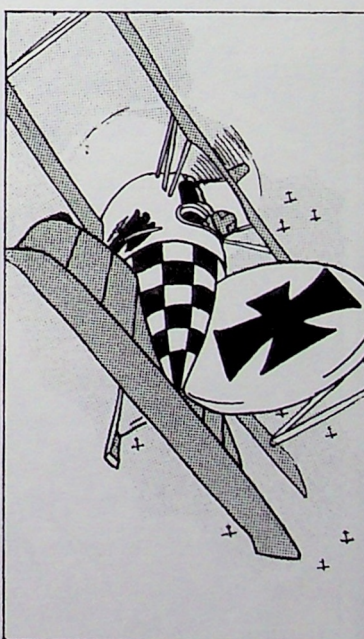


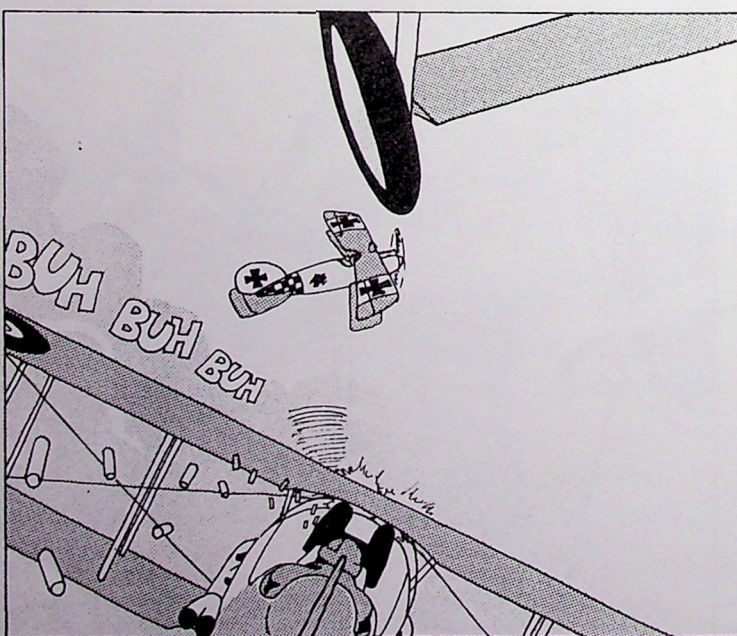
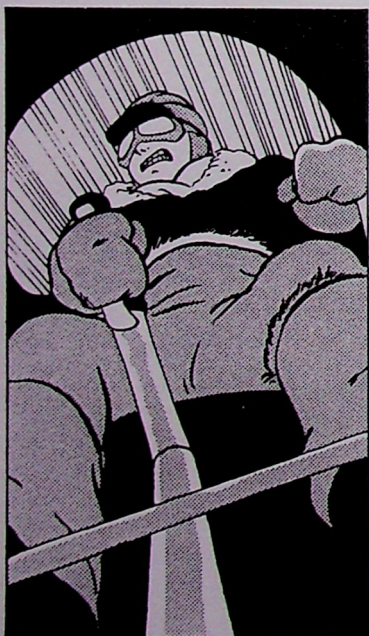
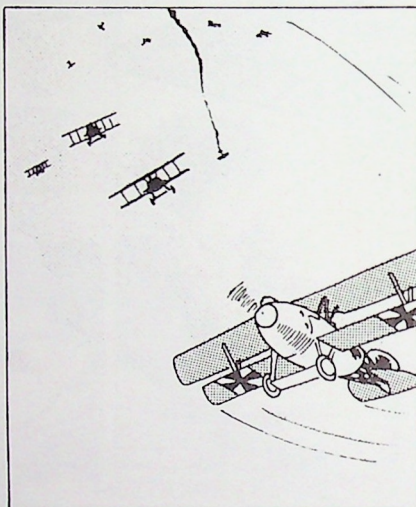
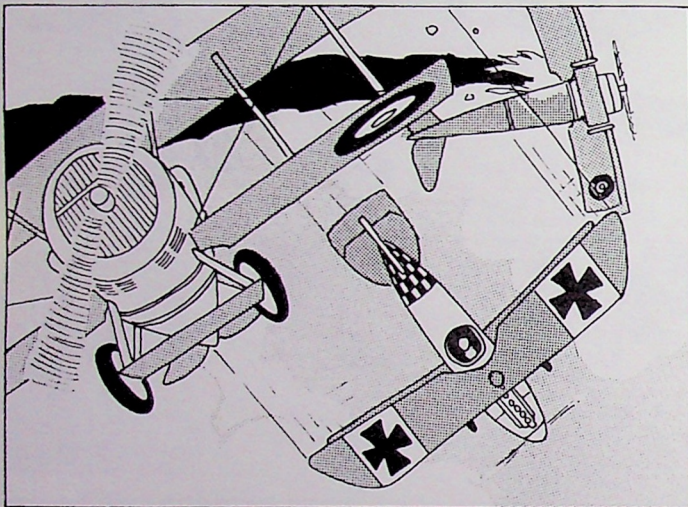
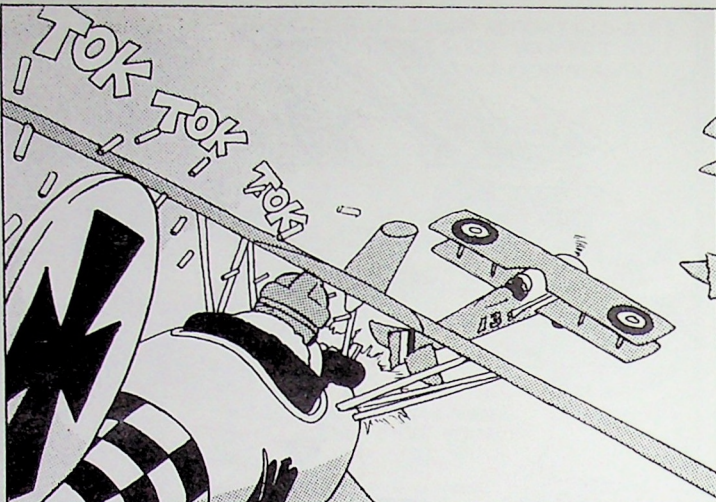
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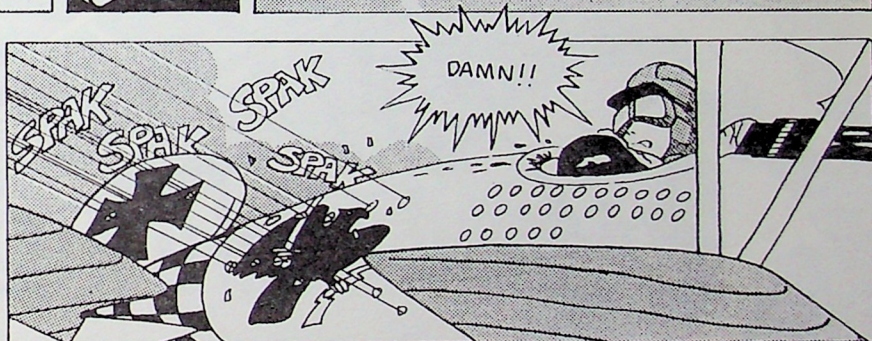
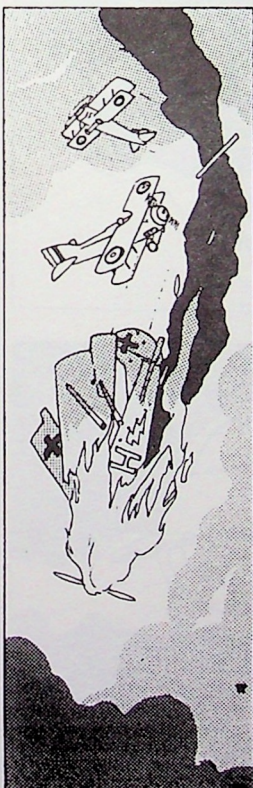
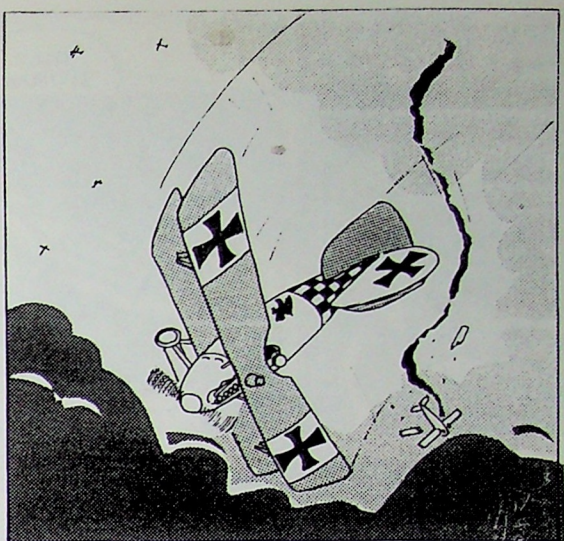
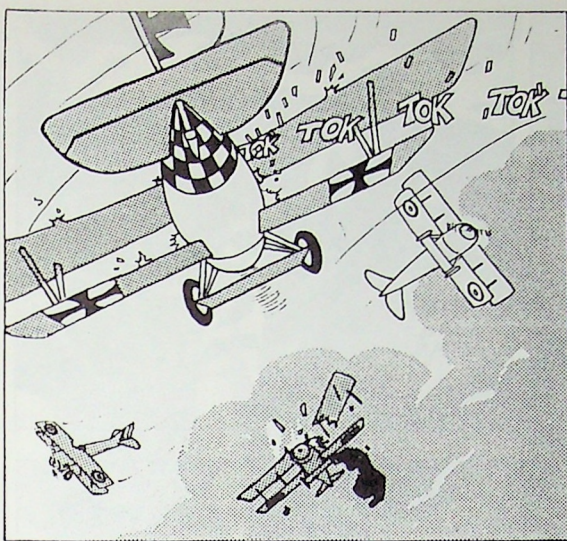


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STEVE RITTLER
• FINISHES + LETTERS
CHUCK SPRATLIN

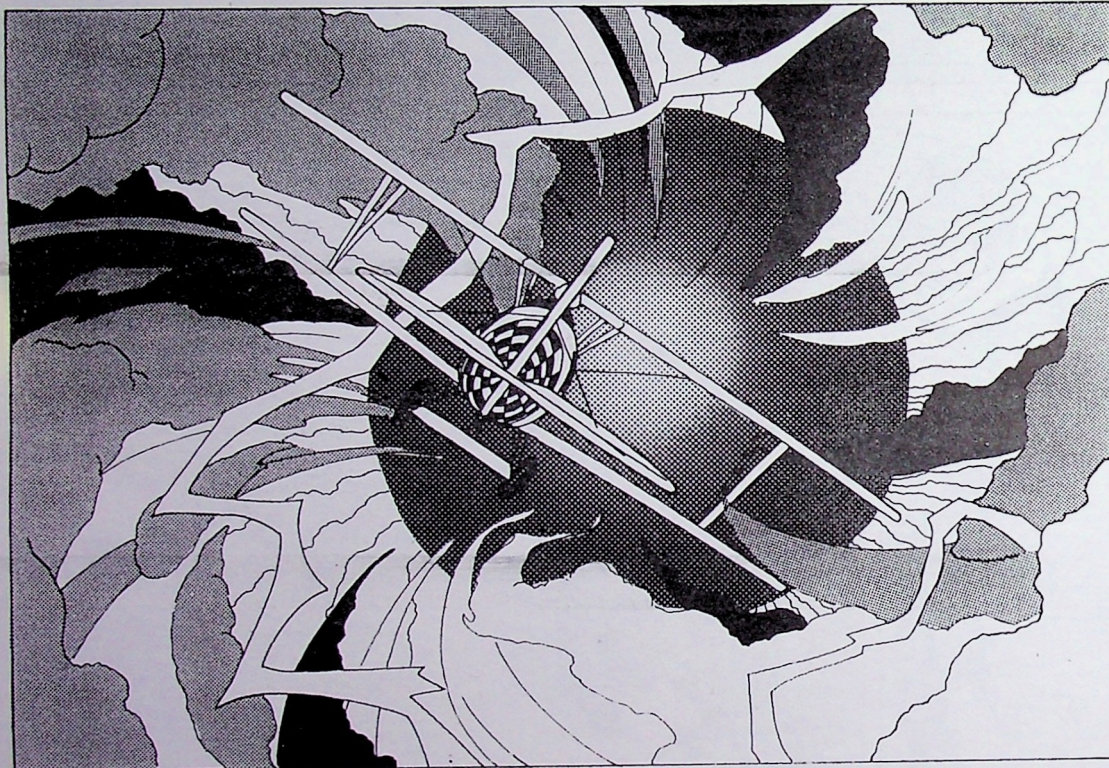
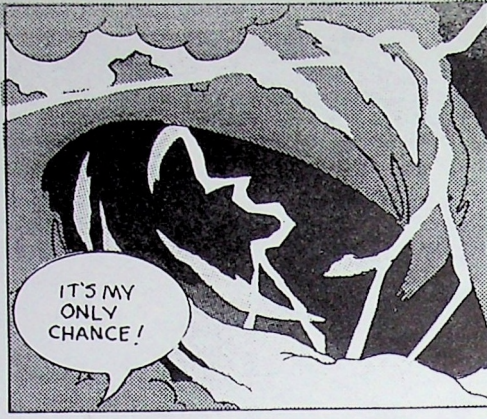
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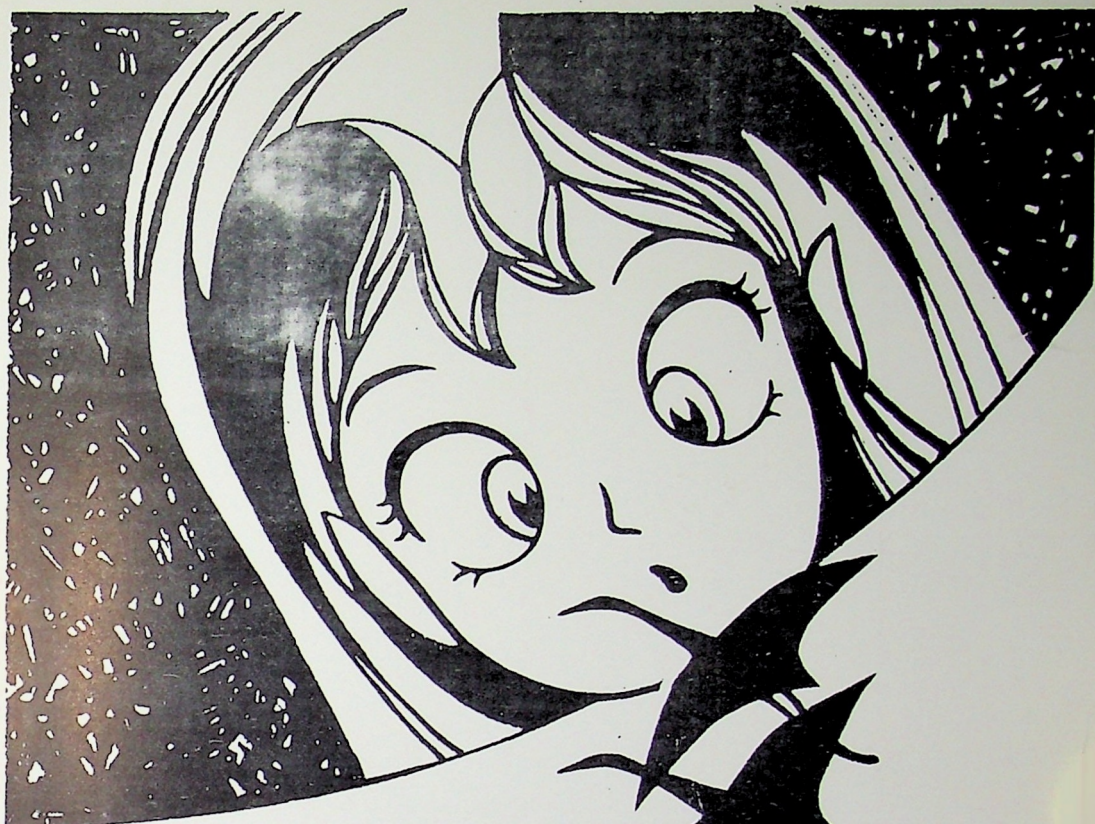






THE ALLIED ASSAULT ON THE GERMAN IMPERIAL FORCES AT ST. MIEHEL INCLUDED A FORCE OF OVER 1500 ALLIED AIR CRAFT. THE 295 GERMAN PLANES STATIONED IN THAT SECTOR VALIANTLY COUNTER ATTACKED, BUT NUMBERED ALMOST 6 TO 1. ST. MIEHEL FELL TO THE ALLIES THE SAME DAY.





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